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SENATE BILL 5237

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State of Washington

61st Legislature

2009 Regular Session

By Senators Shin, Kilmer, Berkey, Kastama, Sheldon, Hobbs, Kauffman, Schoesler, Franklin, and Fraser

Read first time 01/16/09. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to an accelerated baccalaureate degree program;  
2 adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that some students are  
5 eager to complete a degree in the shortest time possible in order to  
6 enter the job market. The legislature further finds that providing a  
7 streamlined path to a baccalaureate degree would shorten the time  
8 required for students to complete a degree, improve the graduation  
9 rate, and improve accessibility for students who have proven academic  
10 abilities. The legislature intends to provide an accelerated  
11 baccalaureate degree program that will allow academically qualified  
12 students to obtain baccalaureate degrees in three years. The  
13 legislature further intends that academically qualified students will  
14 be able to forgo some of the normal first-year general education  
15 requirements, enabling them to complete the accelerated baccalaureate  
16 degree program without attending summer courses or enrolling in more  
17 than a full-time class load during the regular academic year.

1        NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 2.**   A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW  
2   to read as follows:

3        (1) State universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen  
4   State College shall develop accelerated baccalaureate degree programs  
5   that will allow academically qualified students to obtain a  
6   baccalaureate degree in three years without attending summer classes or  
7   enrolling in more than a full-time class load during the regular  
8   academic year. The programs must allow academically qualified students  
9   to begin course work within their academic field during their first  
10   term or semester of enrollment.

11        (2) "Academically qualified student" means a student who either:

12        (a) Graduated from high school with a cumulative grade point  
13   average of 3.5 or higher;

14        (b) Scored in the top ten percent on both the critical reading and  
15   mathematics sections of the SAT; or

16        (c) Scored in the top ten percent on both the mathematics and  
17   English sections of the ACT test.

18        (3) The state universities, regional universities, and The  
19   Evergreen State College shall submit their plans for the accelerated  
20   baccalaureate degree programs to the higher education coordinating  
21   board by December 1, 2010, for approval.

22        (4) The accelerated baccalaureate degree program shall be available  
23   to students admitted at the state universities, regional universities,  
24   and The Evergreen State College for the 2010-11 academic year.

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