

## A BILL

TO AMEND SECTION 59-46-90 SO AS TO EXCLUDE FROM THE BIBLE INSTITUTION AND THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS EXEMPTION THOSE NONPUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WHICH SELL DEGREES TO THE PUBLIC WITH NO OR INSIGNIFICANT REQUIREMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: AND TO ADD A NEW SECTION ( 59-46-95) WHICH AUTHORIZES THE COMMISSION TO REQUIRE ANY NONPUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TO ESTABLISH ITS ELIGIBILITY FOR EXEMPTION UNDER SECTION 59-46-90.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of South Carolina:

SECTION 1: Amend Section 59-46-90 to read:

Provisions of this chapter shall not apply to Bible institutions or theological schools. Provided, however, that this exemption shall apply only to those Bible institutions or theological schools which award, confer or bestow earned degrees for academic study or achievement at said institutions or schools and shall not apply to nonpublic educational institutions whether or not they characterize themselves as Bible institutions or theological schools which sell or offer for sale to the public, whether directly or indirectly, degrees which purport to be earned degrees but are in fact sold or offered for sale with either no or insignificant requirement of academic study or achievement.

SECTION 2: Add new Section 59-46-95 to the 1976 Code to read:

Whenever the Commission shall have reasonable cause to believe that a nonpublic educational institution which is holding itself out to the public as a Bible institution or theological school is engaged in the sale or offering for sale of degrees which purport to be earned degrees, the Commission may require such institution to appear before it and establish to the satisfaction of the Commission that the institution is eligible for exemption under Section

59-46-90. If the Commission, following its hearing, shall determine that there is reason to believe that the institution is in fact engaged in the sale or offering for sale of degrees which purport to be earned but which are in fact being sold or offered for sale with no or insignificant requirement of academic study or achievement, the Commission may refer the matter to the South Carolina Attorney General for appropriate action.

SECTION 3: This Act shall take effect upon approval by the Governor.