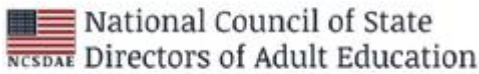




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ADULT EDUCATION LEADERS URGE CONGRESS TO INCREASE FUNDING BY \$100 MILLION TO PUT MORE AMERICANS ON PATH TO SOCIAL MOBILITY

Washington, D.C. – As the U.S. House and Senate appropriations committees determine how to allocate new non-defense discretionary funds for fiscal year 2018, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) and the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE) urge Congress to direct \$100 million to adult education to reach more of the 36 million Americans with low literacy, putting them on the path to social mobility and strengthening our nation’s workforce and economic vitality.

Adult education prepares 1.5 million learners age 16 and older for success in the rapidly changing workforce by providing college and career readiness skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education and employment. Academic skill reinforcement is coupled with training in the real life context of the adult without a high school level of education. “With additional funding, the adult education system could reach more of the individuals struggling to achieve or sustain self-sufficiency -by ensuring greater resources for programs that deliver services directly to the students according to NCSDAE Executive Director Patricia Tyler.

President Trump signed a continuing resolution that included the increased non-defense discretionary funding on February 9. Federal funding for adult education is currently at approximately \$582 million; the additional \$100 million would be a 17 percent increase to address critical areas such as long student wait lists, program quality and low adult educator pay.

“Adult education is severely underfunded: We serve only 1.5 million of the more than 36 million individuals who could benefit from our help,” COABE Executive Director Sharon Bonney said. “As the need has increased, funding has decreased. Additional funding would reduce wait lists and ensure more trained workers for the numerous jobs out there for individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent, putting more individuals into family-sustaining jobs and reducing the number of people enrolled in public-assistance programs.”

In addition to helping individuals earn their high school diploma or equivalency, adult education prepares them to transition into postsecondary education. According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, 65 percent of all jobs in 2020 will require some level of postsecondary education and training beyond high school, making adult education an important gateway to college.

Supporters are encouraged to contact their congressional representatives to voice their support for additional funding and may utilize COABE’s [Take Action tool](#), which streamlines the process and allows elected officials to be contacted with three quick clicks.

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