



### **Who We Are:**

COABE is the leading association for adult education, representing 79,000 adult educators and leaders around the country. Our teachers and leaders provide numeracy, literacy, English language skills, digital and information literacy, work readiness, soft skills, high school equivalency and numerous wraparound services to more than 1 million adult learners nationwide. With over 2,200 WIOA Title II programs around the country, COABE members work tirelessly to help underserved adults master the skills they need to compete and build careers – along with better futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

### **Funding Request:**

#### **Invest \$810 million in the Adult Education State Grants program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024.**

- If properly resourced and supported, adult education can be the difference between failing to make ends meet and securing a family-sustaining wage, while ensuring employers have access to a pool of skilled workers.
- Additional funding is needed to meet the high demand for adult education and enable programs to best serve their students – in-person, online or in hybrid settings.
- Online and hybrid classes provide flexibility for learners who are often juggling work and family responsibilities while participating in adult education programs. Adult educators cite lack of devices and broadband as one of the top barriers to serving more learners.
- Investing in technology, capacity building and professional development is critical.
- If funding is boosted to a level that would better meet the demand and need, adult education programs can play a significant role in the country's economic recovery by providing millions of adult learners with necessary workforce and life skills, opening doors to opportunities they otherwise might not be able to access.

### **Policy Requests:**

#### **Support/Cosponsor the forthcoming, bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act to be introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN).**

- The reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides a significant opportunity to improve the adult education system (which is authorized under Title II of WIOA).
- As Congress considers the WIOA reauthorization, we urge you to include the recommendations that COABE has developed, working closely with program directors, educators and learners, which include:
  - Authorizing an innovative pilot performance accountability system;
  - Ensuring adult education representation on State and local workforce boards; and
  - Supporting the professionalization of adult educators.

- These and other COABE's WIOA reauthorization recommendations are all included in the forthcoming, bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act to be reintroduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN).

**Support/Cosponsor the forthcoming, bipartisan Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act to be introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN).**

- To understand how to best educate and upskill our nation's [43 million adults](#) who are low-skilled in literacy, it is critical that the work of practitioners, stakeholder and policymakers be informed by relevant, actionable and recent research in adult literacy.
- That is why COABE is advocating to improve research in adult education by:
  - directing the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Center on Education Research (NCER) to collect data and carry out research on successful state and local adult education and literacy activities that result in increased literacy and numeracy and educational attainment for adult learners, the characteristics and academic achievements of adult learners, and access to, and opportunity for, adult education, including digital literacy skills development; and
  - requiring that at least one research center focuses on adult education and literacy activities.
- All of COABE's Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) reauthorization recommendations are included in the forthcoming, bipartisan Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act to be introduced by Senators Jack Reed and Todd Young and were included in [S. 1126](#) (117<sup>th</sup> Congress).