COABE Capitol Hill Day Webinar
March 2, 2020
Representing the system of 65,000 Adult Educators and Leaders and 1.5 Million Learners
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Capitol Hill Day logistics will be shared on the webinar on 3/23. Be sure to join us so you have all of the important details!
How to Set up a Hill Meeting

• We recommend scheduling hill meetings about one month before Capitol Hill Day -- For the April 8 Capitol Hill Day, now is a good time to begin reaching out to your legislators
• Using the Ignite Software, find the two Senators that represent your State and the Member of Congress that represents your district
• Ensure that you are reaching out to the office education staffer, rather than the office scheduler (Ignite should do this for you)
• The text of the meeting request will be pre-populated
• If you do not get a response after about a week, we recommend sending a follow up request
What to Expect

- You will be meeting with staff rather than the Member of Congress – remember that this is a high priority, productive meeting
  - Staff have the ear of the member and make many important funding decisions
- Don’t be surprised if your meeting is held in a hallway or a tight space
- You may have a limited amount of time
  - The meeting will be no more than 30 minutes but could be less
  - Ensure that your talking points are concise and that you’re able to pitch your “ask”
- During the meeting, staff may look at their phones. Don’t get distracted or be offended by this
- Be nimble in the conversation, while focused on getting your point across
Tips for Hill Visits

You are the expert
Members and staff want to learn from you
Tips for Hill Visits

Localize your story
Members and staff want info from their States/Districts
Tips for Hill Visits

Personalize your story
Share the story of adult learners you know
Pro Tips for Hill Visits

• Take notes
• If you don’t know the answer to a question, it is okay – tell the staff that you will get the answer and follow up after the meeting
• Invite the staff and the Member of Congress to come for a site visit to see your work firsthand
• Leave a business card
• Always send a follow up email
  - Thank the staff
  - Answer questions and any other follow up items
Upcoming Recess Weeks

- Below are upcoming weeks where legislators will be back in their home States or Districts
- Recess weeks are an opportunity to request meetings with legislators in the district and to do site visits

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<th>House of Representatives</th>
<th>Senate</th>
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<td>May 1-11</td>
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On December 20, 2019 Congress passed its fiscal year 2020 appropriations bill.

The final bill included $670.6 million in funding for adult education programs – an increase of $15 million over FY2019 levels.

-- Thanks to your advocacy efforts!

About one month ago, the President unveiled his budget proposal for fiscal year 2021.

The budget proposal requested $670.6 million for adult education – level funding.

-- Reminder that the president’s budget proposal is not the final budget.

-- Adult education fared relatively well compared to other programs.
The president unveiled his fiscal year 2021 budget proposal in early February. This signals the official start of the fiscal year 2021 appropriations process—we need your voices heard early and often!

In terms of process, we do not expect Congress to agree on a final appropriations deal until after the 2020 presidential election. The House of Representatives will likely draft its Labor, Health, Human Services and Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) bill (this is where adult education program funding is allocated) and consider it in committee and on the floor. The Senate may draft its LHHS bill and consider it in committee and on the floor—but this is unclear at this time.

Regardless, appropriations work is underway and it is critical that COABE makes the voices of adult educators heard!
Dear Colleague Letter

- A Dear Colleague Letter is a letter that is drafted by, and sent to, Members of Congress.
- The letter indicates Member support for a certain Federal program, such as the Adult Education State Grant program.
- Many Dear Colleague Letters circulate throughout Congress during the appropriations cycle.
- There is typically a separate letter in the Senate and in the House.
  -- The Adult Education Dear Colleague letter is led by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) in the Senate and Congressman Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) and John Yarmuth (D-KY) in the House.
- The leaders of the Dear Colleague Letters, with our help, circulate the letter and work to get Senators and Representatives to sign on to the letter.
  -- Each signature indicates a Member of Congress’ public support for the program.
- The Dear Colleague Letter is then submitted to the Appropriations Committees to indicate support for the program. Signaling support to appropriators through Dear Colleague Letters is extremely important as appropriators are in charge of making difficult funding decisions.
• The more signatures a Dear Colleague Letter gets, the more support is demonstrated for the program in Congress
• We need your help to ensure that our Dear Colleague Letters receives a significant number of signatures
• Please reach out to your legislators and ask them to sign our Dear Colleague Letter in support of the Adult Education State Grant program
  -- You can reach out to your legislators through the Ignite software
  -- The email text will be pre-populated and the letter will be attached
• Reminder: Often times Members of Congress that are on the Appropriations Committees will not sign on to Dear Colleague Letters, as they do not want to sign a letter that is essentially going to themselves
  -- Here is a link to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee memberships so you can check to see if your legislator is a member of these committees
Preview of Messaging

• Who we are
• What we do
  -- Include State/local specifics about the adult education program you run and relate back to the staff
• Our FY2021 ask
  -- In the final FY2021 appropriations bill, we urge Congress to fund Adult Education at least at $692 million
• Our need
• Our impact
Reminder

Please put your meeting times and locations into the scheduler.
• Please join us for an office hours style debrief in either the House or Senate cafeteria – TBD on specifics.
• It is extremely important to our overall success.
Next Steps

• Plan to join us our next webinar on 3/23 at 2EST.
• Schedule your legislative appointments.