



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 one 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) 2025.

- 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 are critical.
- If funding is boosted to a level that would better meet the demand and need, adult education programs can help adult learners gain necessary workforce and life skills, opening doors to opportunities they otherwise might not be able to access while ensuring a healthy resilient economy that lifts up all communities.

Policy Requests:

Senators: Support/Cosponsor S.3075, the bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act, introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN).

Members of the House of Representatives: Support/Cosponsor H.R. 5987, the Adult Education WORKS Act, introduced by Representative Lucy McBath (D-GA)

- 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:

- Piloting new approaches to measuring program performance and learner outcomes;
 - Ensuring that adult learners gain needed digital literacy and information literacy skills;
 - Devoting additional resources to professional development for practitioners;
 - Providing opportunities to professionalize the adult educator field;
 - Adding adult education representation on State and local workforce boards to strengthen coordination throughout the entire workforce development system; and
 - Promoting the use of integrated education and training programs (IETs);
- These and other COABE WIOA reauthorization recommendations are included in the bipartisan Adult Education WORKS Act, introduced by Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Todd Young (R-IN) and in the House of Representatives by Representative Lucy McBath (D-GA).
 - Moreover, the House of Representatives will soon consider a WIOA reauthorization bill, [H.R. 6655](#), A Stronger Workforce for America Act, that incorporates many, but not all of COABE's WIOA priorities as included in the Adult Education WORKS Act. We want to urge the House and Senate to incorporate more of the Adult Education WORKS Act into the WIOA reauthorization bills they consider.

Add Support/Cosponsor S.1268, the bipartisan Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act, 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.
- We are in urgent need of identifying and disseminating innovative and effective methods for supporting adult learners. Our current education research system does not provide sufficient emphasis of focus to ensure there is a strong research base to improve educational programs for adults seeking to advance their literacy, numeracy, and digital and information literacy skills.
- 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 bipartisan Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act (S.1268), introduced by Senators Jack Reed and Todd Young. Moreover, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee included much of the Strengthening Research in Adult Education Act in [S. 3392](#), the Advancing Research in Education Act (AREA), legislation to reauthorize the Education Science Reform Act.