



# National Coalition For Literacy

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education ◦ Adult Literacy Media Alliance ◦ American Council on Education, GED Testing Service ◦ American Institute for Research ◦ American Library Association ◦ Center for Literacy Studies, University of Tennessee ◦ Commission on Adult Basic Education ◦ Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy and the Goodling Institute for Research, Pennsylvania State University ◦ International Reading Association ◦ National Center for Family Literacy ◦ National Council of State Directors of Adult Education ◦ ProLiteracy Worldwide ◦ Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. ◦ World Education

December 18, 2008

TO: Transition Team on Youth Education and Employment

FROM: National Coalition for Literacy

RE: Adult Education and an Economic Stimulus Package

As you work to develop an economic stimulus package, the National Coalition for Literacy respectfully requests that you support providing \$500 million in additional funds for adult education.

For millions of Americans, the ability to obtain a job with a family sustaining wage or to retain current employment in our depressed economy depends on their educational and job skills. According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, approximately 93 million Americans have limited or very low levels of literacy.

By combining funds provided to states under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act with state and local funds, we are currently able to serve 3 million individuals a year. In the current crisis, this will not meet the increasing demands for services. The adult education program works and is one of only four programs within the Department of Education to receive an effective rating on the PART. The only thing blocking our ability to provide assistance to greater numbers of those in need is funding.

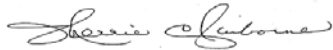
In order for these individuals to meet the demands of today's highly technological workforce and to compete for the jobs of tomorrow, we must work to upgrade their skills and provide them with the education they require to keep our nation competitive. We cannot wait for today's students to enter the workforce, we must ensure today's workers are highly skilled and able to help the United States remain a world leader. An additional investment in adult education programs will move us towards the achievement of this goal.

***With the current focus on creating jobs and retraining America's workforce, we recommend that the majority of a \$500 million increase be used for adult education programs that integrate basic skills, English language instruction, and occupational training and focus on transition to postsecondary education. At the same time, we encourage you not to forget our need to focus on those who are hardest to serve, those at the lowest skill and literacy level, who may need additional support services to attend adult education courses, complete their education, enter a training program, transition to postsecondary education or obtain a job.***

The National Coalition for Literacy is a not-for-profit umbrella organization representing 27 member organizations, serving adults in every community. NCL represents adult education, family literacy, English as a Second Language, research, public policy, and adult learner organizations. These organizations are focused on helping adults establish and meet education, English language, workplace, parenting, and citizenship goals in the service of individual and community development.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact the NCL staff (Lynn Selmsler, NCL Policy Director, or Jennifer Maloney, NCL Director) or me should you have any questions regarding this request or need additional information to support our request.

Sincerely,



**Sherrie Claiborne**  
**President**

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