



National Coalition for Literacy

Dear _____:

As President of the United States, you will have the responsibility to ensure America's economic competitiveness in the 21st century. This will be a daunting challenge. More than 36 million adults in America have low basic reading, writing, and math skills. An even larger number lack the ability to solve problems in technology-rich environments, a skill of growing importance.

This problem has an adverse impact on the employability and earnings of American adults and, equally important, on our nation's economic and social well-being. It promotes income inequality while undermining our democracy and founding principles. It costs our nation billions of dollars annually in lost revenue and in increased costs for health care, corrections, welfare, and unemployment.

Investing in adult education can reverse these trends. But the harsh reality is that adult education programs are operating on starvation budgets, unable to serve more than a fraction of students in need. Long waiting lists are a fact of life for 72% of our programs in all 50 states. Even as we ask our system to do much more, federal and state funding for adult education and workforce skills development has declined.

This high-priority challenge requires presidential leadership. We urge you to make adult education a priority and commit to improving services and outreach for our under-skilled adults through a sustained multi-year investment commensurate with the scale of the need. We respectfully ask that you review and answer the questions attached, and pledge your support for adult education and workforce skills development in America.

If you would find it helpful, we would be pleased to meet with you or a member of your staff.

Best Regards,

Peter Waite

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter A. Waite".

Executive Vice President
ProLiteracy

Jeff Carter

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Carter".

President
National Coalition for Literacy