

Stimulus News Release

Stimulus Funding Needed to Support Adult Literacy for Employment

Title II of the Workforce Investment Act Left Out of Recovery Bill

(Jan. 26, 2009, Syracuse, NY) — David C. Harvey, president of ProLiteracy, today called for President Obama and his economic team to include Title II of the Workforce Investment Act in the economic recovery proposal. ProLiteracy is the world's largest organization of adult literacy and basic education programs.

"I applaud the efforts of Congress and our new President to craft a stimulus bill that creates millions of jobs," Harvey said. "But to help people who will have the most difficulty finding jobs — low-literate workers— a recovery bill must provide adult literacy and employment training opportunities through Title II of the Workforce Investment Act."

Harvey pointed out that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to be reviewed by House subcommittees this week funds job training services for at-risk youth, individuals with disabilities, and older Americans through Titles I, III, and IV of the Workforce Investment Act.

"But inexplicably, Title II appears to be left out of the bill," Harvey said. "Many of those nearly 3 million jobs lost during 2008 were by individuals who will need additional help with basic reading, math, or English skills to take advantage of the jobs that the Recovery Act will create."

Title II of the Workforce Investment Act, also known as the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, is the largest source of federal funding for programs that teach adults reading, writing, math, technology skills, and English as a Second Language. Government reports estimate that 30 million adults in the U.S. don't read well enough to fill out a job application without help.

"Low-literate adults have not gotten the support from the government that they deserve for many years now. It's a new administration and a new Congress — it's a perfect opportunity for the government to take a new attitude towards adult literacy," Harvey said.

Individuals who share ProLiteracy's position can send e-mails to President Obama and members of Congress through ProLiteracy's Website, www.proliteracy.org

About ProLiteracy

ProLiteracy works with adult new readers and learners, and with local and national organizations to help adults gain the reading, writing, math, computer, and English skills they need to be successful in today's society. ProLiteracy advocates on behalf of adult learners and the programs that serve them, provides training and professional development, and publishes materials used in adult literacy instruction. It represents member programs in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, and in 50 developing countries. For more information, please go to www.proliteracy.org and www.newreaderspress.com