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## **MAACCE Urges Congress to Support Maryland Adults & Families Striving for Better Jobs, Income & Quality of Life By Investing \$649M in Adult Ed**

*MAACCE Joins National & State Groups During Adult Education and Family Literacy Week 2017, Held Sept.24-30, to Advocate for MD Adult Learners*

**WASHINGTON – Sept. 8, 2017** – The Maryland Association for Adult, Community and Continuing Education (MAACCE) is fighting for more than 750,000 adults in Maryland who need adult education and literacy services to improve their lives, career options and income. Currently, Maryland receives \$9.06 million in federal funds for adult basic education programs, however for FY18 a 16 percent cut has been proposed.

According to MAACCE, the proposed cut to federal funding would severely impact programs in every county across Maryland – from lowering the number of class offerings to trimming staff to closing doors. Before the budget cuts are approved, representatives from MAACCE, the Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE), the National Council of State Directors of Adult Education (NCSDAE), state associations, and adult learners will be meeting with congressional representatives on Capitol Hill on **Tuesday, Sept. 26 to urge them to reject the cuts and invest in adult education** at the congressionally authorized level of \$649 million needed to fulfill the goals of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The “Capitol Hill Day” visit is part of the Educate and Elevate Campaign – a collaboration of COABE AND NCSDAE – and it also dovetails with efforts for Adult Education and Family Literacy Week (AEFL) 2017 (Sept. 24-30), sponsored by the National Coalition for Literacy, to increase the public’s understanding and awareness of the need to support adult literacy, increase federal funding, and leverage local funds.

“When our leaders talk about creating new jobs and investing in people, they need to understand just how critical adult education is to the equation,” said Douglas Weimer, president of MAACCE. “There are 36 million Americans who struggle to read, write, do math, and use technology above a third grade level. An investment in quality adult education is the key to helping these individuals succeed in the workforce.”

Research shows that increasing investments in adult basic skills programs contributes to a healthy economy, increased employment, reduced public assistance, and lower health care costs. In Maryland alone, there are 500,000 adults lacking a high school diploma, which **costs the state approximately \$3.6 billion per year** in lost earnings, taxes, and productivity. Two of the largest counties in Maryland – Montgomery and Prince George’s – have a combined estimate of 270,000 adults who need adult education and literacy services. However at current funding levels, Maryland programs only have the capacity to serve 10 percent of the adults needing assistance.

“The stakes are too high to justify cutting funding for adult education programs. We know that a mother’s education is one of the primary indicators of a child’s success. So, it’s not just about today’s adults, we are also concerned about the next generation,” said Weimer. “We need everyone in Maryland to join with us to raise awareness around the importance of these programs.”



During AEFL week, Sept. 24-30, MAACCE is asking Maryland constituents to reach out to their local congressional representatives through phone calls, emails, and written letters. MAACCE has compiled several tools to assist Marylanders in these efforts:

- Locate your congressional representatives and their contact information.  
[www.house.gov/htbin/findrep](http://www.house.gov/htbin/findrep)
- Send an email message by visiting [www.educateandelevate.org](http://www.educateandelevate.org). Follow the instructions listed on the homepage under the “**Email Outreach**” section.
- To write a physical letter, check out the letter writing templates at [www.proliteracy.org/letters-for-literacy](http://www.proliteracy.org/letters-for-literacy)
- Follow MAACCE’s Facebook and Twitter pages for updates at [www.facebook.com/MAACCE/](http://www.facebook.com/MAACCE/) and [twitter.com/maaccemd](http://twitter.com/maaccemd).

Maryland supporters of adult education are also encouraged to help raise awareness by participating in MAACCE’s **GO GREEN** for **LITERACY** Campaign by wearing green wristbands and/or the color green during AEFL week, and posting pictures on Facebook or Twitter using #InvestInMarylandAdultEdu , #MAACCEgreen, and #AEFLWeek in the posts when possible.

Those interested in obtaining the green wristbands can send an email to [maacce@gmail.com](mailto:maacce@gmail.com) to request them. Additional details may be found at [www.maaccemd.org](http://www.maaccemd.org) and [www.educateandelevate.org/maryland](http://www.educateandelevate.org/maryland).

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***The Maryland Association for Adult, Community and Continuing Education is a non-profit organization providing leadership in Maryland for those interested in advancing education as a lifelong process. MAACCE provides a central forum for a wide variety of adult, community and continuing education groups and encourages organizations and agencies in Maryland to cooperate in a broad spectrum of educational programs and activities in support of the lifelong learning concept.***