



Michigan Association
of Community and
Adult Education



April 15, 2015

The Honorable Darwin Booher
Michigan Senate
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Senator Booher:

We are writing to urge you as a member of the Appropriations Committee to adopt the School Aid Subcommittee's recommendation to increase adult education funding by \$7 million to \$29 million.

The governor and Legislature have both emphasized the importance of increasing the skill level of Michigan's workforce to strengthen families and the economy. An important component of this is to increase the number of people getting GEDs and/or acquiring basic skills in order to prepare them for occupational skills training leading to employment, and this will require an increase in adult education funding.

Michigan has seen a large reduction in state funding for adult education during the past 20 years, from \$185 million in 1996 to \$22 million today. As a result, fewer people enroll in and complete adult education programs. Michigan is currently not reaching anywhere near enough of the working-age adults who need these programs:

- Over 221,500 Michigan adults age 25-44 lack a high school diploma or GED, but fewer than 7% are enrolled in adult education.
- More than 225,000 Michigan adults speak English less than "very well," but fewer than 5% enroll in English as a Second Language adult education programs.
- 60% of Michigan community college students need to take remedial education classes because they have not mastered skills needed for postsecondary education.

The Senate Subcommittee proposal to increase the Section 107 adult education appropriation by \$7 million is a step in the right direction. We urge you to support this increase that will help more Michigan adults prepare for training in skilled occupations.

Sincerely,

Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education
Michigan League for Public Policy
Michigan's Children