

LETTER WRITING GUIDELINES

ONE PAGE LETTERS ARE THE BEST. Handwritten letters are still acceptable; either faxed or sent by US mail, as are letters sent by email. Because of anthrax screening of US mail, letters sent by this method will take much longer to arrive than faxed or emailed letters (possibly several weeks). Letters by email should have a subject line: Increase funding for adult education.

Letters can be sent directly to members of the House by accessing the US House of Representatives Website, <http://www.house.gov>, clicking on Write Your Representative, then entering your state and zip code. US Senators may be contacted directly by going to <http://www.senate.gov>, identifying your state, and then clicking on the US Senator's email address.

We are asking everyone to write three letters, all identical except for the address, to their Member of Congress and two US Senators, (see enclosed list for contact information). Our goal is 750 letters from the district of each member of the House of Representatives and up to 40,000, depending on the size of the state, to each US Senator.

STUDENT LETTERS

Student letters are the most persuasive. In the letter the student should state why he or she decided to enroll in the program, describe ways in which the program has impacted their lives, and ask the US Senator or member of the House to restore funding for adult education to this year's level.

The strongest rationale that we have found for motivating students to become involved in advocating for their programs is the concept that each year Congress and the President allocate their tax money for a wide variety of purposes. If students are not part of the process, then someone else will decide how their tax money will be spent.

Most students are very capable of writing strong persuasive letters. However in a few cases we have dealt with students who have created letters containing profanity and other comments that would be detrimental to the effort. Therefore some programs have developed a process where the letters are read by teachers or administrators prior to mailing or faxing. This is a natural process if students are working on the letters as a writing project for their class.

Former students who have been successful in the program are also very willing to write letters in support of increased funding.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING STAFF LETTERS

Both administrators and teachers have wonderful stories to tell about the value of the program to their students and the community as a whole. Teachers can talk about individual student stories and administrators can convey some of the important student data about the program. If you have students on waiting lists for entrance into the program please address this situation in your letter. If possible, it is always useful to have letters written by the students on the waiting lists.

LETTERS FROM FRIENDS OF ADULT EDUCATION

Most adult education programs have Boards of Directors, School Boards, Community College Boards and Advisory Committees whose members are very willing to write in support of the program. Volunteer tutors who work in some programs would also be a good source for letters. In addition local business people, Chambers of Commerce, etc., can also be allies in this effort.

