

CLASP

CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

For immediate release
Wednesday, February 23, 2005

Contact: Gayle Bennett, CLASP, (202) 906-8013,
gbennett@clasp.org

President's Budget Slashes Adult Education Funding *U.S. Risks Shortage of Skilled Workers*

(Washington, DC)—The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) estimates that nearly half a million people—at least 470,000—would be denied literacy, Adult Basic Education, GED, and English as a Second Language services due to the President's proposed budget cuts. Because states must use 25 percent of their own monies in order to receive federal adult education funds, states may cut back on their own investment in proportion to the federal cut, resulting in even more students being turned away. These cuts doom millions of Americans to unemployment and low-wage jobs. In addition, businesses risk a shortage of skilled workers at a time when the U.S. workforce is aging.

"Slashing funding for adult education and English language classes is an attempt to lower the deficit at the expense of those trying to better themselves," said Amy-Ellen Duke, Policy Analyst at CLASP. "Making it harder for adults to get the education and English skills they need to succeed will ultimately hurt the U.S. economy."

More than 51 million American out-of-school youth and adults lack a high school diploma or GED, and 29 million are in need of English language services. However, only 2.8 million individuals can be served by current public adult education and English language efforts, according to the Department of Education. Yet the Bush Administration proposes to slash funding for these programs by nearly three-fourths (74.1 percent)—from the current \$501.1 million to \$131.4 million.

Some states would be especially hard hit:

- More than half of those seeking services would have to be turned away in 11 states—Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and Texas—and in Puerto Rico.
- Eleven states would lose 75 percent or more of their federal adult education funding—California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas.
- Another 25 states and Puerto Rico would lose at least 70 percent of their grants.

Many of these same states face especially high demand for adult education services:

- In 17 states, many of them in the South or Southwest, at least 1 in 4 adults is in need of adult education and/or English language services.
- In 6 of these 17 states—California, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, Texas—30 percent or more of all adults lack a high school diploma, have limited proficiency in English, or both.

* * * *

To download the full analysis of the proposed adult education cuts, visit www.clasp.org. To set up an interview with Amy-Ellen Duke or Julie Strawn, contact Gayle Bennett at (202) 906-8013.

* * * *

A national, nonprofit organization founded in 1968, CLASP conducts research, policy analysis, technical assistance, and advocacy on issues related to economic security of low-income families with children.

Estimated Impact of Proposed FY 06 Cuts in Adult Education and English Language Programs, by State

State or Other Area	2001-2002 Total Enrollment	2001-2002 Cost Per Student	Proposed Cut in State FY 06 Grant	Percent Change in Grant FY 05 to FY 06	Estimate of Students Denied Services	
					Number	% of Enroll.
ALABAMA	19,745	\$744	-6,762,467	-74.0%	-9,086	-46.0%
ALASKA	5,272	\$490	-551,844	-56.6%	-1,126	-21.4%
ARIZONA	32,841	\$343	-6,424,411	-73.9%	-18,742	-57.1%
ARKANSAS	39,521	\$597	-4,002,770	-72.6%	-6,707	-17.0%
CALIFORNIA	526,955	\$1,353	-48,285,856	-75.8%	-35,700	-6.8%
COLORADO	15,053	\$450	-4,139,859	-72.7%	-9,191	-61.1%
CONNECTICUT	32,470	\$1,250	-3,609,032	-72.3%	-2,888	-8.9%
DELAWARE	5,428	\$492	-890,821	-62.7%	-1,812	-33.4%
DIST. of COLUMBIA	3,592	\$991	-785,844	-61.3%	-793	-22.1%
FLORIDA	410,346	\$792	-21,012,068	-75.4%	-26,520	-6.5%
GEORGIA	111,329	\$175	-11,194,552	-74.8%	-64,007	-57.5%
HAWAII	11,065	\$414	-1,210,876	-65.8%	-2,926	-26.4%
IDAHO	9,766	\$279	-1,367,897	-66.8%	-4,903	-50.2%
ILLINOIS	123,867	\$315	-14,888,321	-75.1%	-47,234	-38.1%
INDIANA	44,492	\$835	-7,143,219	-74.1%	-8,550	-19.2%
IOWA	19,367	\$642	-2,852,487	-71.3%	-4,446	-23.0%
KANSAS	10,725	\$463	-2,659,201	-71.0%	-5,744	-53.6%
KENTUCKY	33,807	\$541	-6,332,867	-73.9%	-11,712	-34.6%
LOUISIANA	31,679	\$538	-6,835,442	-74.0%	-12,695	-40.1%
MAINE	11,107	\$1,300	-1,305,679	-66.4%	-1,004	-9.0%
MARYLAND	30,463	\$549	-5,602,876	-73.6%	-10,202	-33.5%
MASSACHUSETTS	24,488	\$1,637	-6,399,039	-73.9%	-3,908	-16.0%
MICHIGAN	75,988	\$2,130	-11,036,293	-74.8%	-5,181	-6.8%
MINNESOTA	42,853	\$897	-4,412,904	-72.9%	-4,922	-11.5%
MISSISSIPPI	35,345	\$239	-4,604,422	-73.1%	-19,280	-54.5%
MISSOURI	39,821	\$400	-6,794,651	-74.0%	-16,973	-42.6%
MONTANA	4,420	\$496	-860,235	-62.3%	-1,733	-39.2%
NEBRASKA	9,209	\$338	-1,648,624	-68.2%	-4,884	-53.0%
NEVADA	7,675	\$480	-2,548,998	-70.8%	-5,309	-69.2%
NEW HAMPSHIRE	6,761	\$566	-1,128,068	-65.1%	-1,993	-29.5%
NEW JERSEY	38,973	\$1,173	-9,761,533	-74.6%	-8,321	-21.4%
NEW MEXICO	21,461	\$361	-2,453,508	-70.6%	-6,796	-31.7%
NEW YORK	182,294	\$600	-24,951,078	-75.5%	-41,596	-22.8%
NORTH CAROLINA	112,601	\$460	-10,997,623	-74.8%	-23,923	-21.2%

State or Other Area	2001-2002 Total Enrollment	2001-2002 Cost Per Student	Proposed Cut in State FY 06 Grant	Percent Change in Grant FY 05 to FY 06	Estimate of Students Denied Services	
					Number	% of Enroll.
NORTH DAKOTA	2,205	\$822	-692,158	-59.7%	-842	-38.2%
OHIO	61,522	\$497	-12,862,223	-75.0%	-25,881	-42.1%
OKLAHOMA	21,543	\$387	-4,378,457	-72.9%	-11,326	-52.6%
OREGON	26,314	\$1,369	-3,613,028	-72.3%	-2,640	-10.0%
PENNSYLVANIA	50,948	\$781	-14,427,520	-75.1%	-18,473	-36.3%
RHODE ISLAND	5,235	\$1,018	-1,407,882	-67.0%	-1,382	-26.4%
SOUTH CAROLINA	92,310	\$257	-5,828,742	-73.7%	-22,695	-24.6%
SOUTH DAKOTA	2,716	\$666	-810,354	-61.6%	-1,216	-44.8%
TENNESSEE	46,971	\$335	-8,377,971	-74.4%	-25,036	-53.3%
TEXAS	120,623	\$427	-31,174,022	-75.6%	-73,088	-60.6%
UTAH	31,415	\$335	-2,053,651	-69.6%	-6,129	-19.5%
VERMONT	1,165	\$3,958	-579,798	-57.3%	-147	-12.6%
VIRGINIA	32,418	\$571	-8,381,918	-74.4%	-14,689	-45.3%
WASHINGTON	57,950	\$589	-5,613,359	-73.6%	-9,536	-16.5%
WEST VIRGINIA	10,640	\$689	-2,761,382	-71.2%	-4,008	-37.7%
WISCONSIN	32,173	\$469	-5,553,220	-73.6%	-11,845	-36.8%
WYOMING	2,231	\$591	-456,580	-53.7%	-773	-34.7%
PUERTO RICO	55,836	\$269	-8,207,546	-74.4%	-30,497	-54.6%
UNITED STATES*	2,784,994	\$770	-362,635,176	-74.1%	-471,133	-16.9%

*Totals do not include territories, with the exception of Puerto Rico, or national programs funding.

Source: CLASP calculations from data from U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy.

Note: 2001-2002 is the most recent available data for expenditures and enrollment. FY 05 and FY 06 estimated state grants are from 02/07/05 budget tables. The decreases in funding and number of students served are not uniform across states because 1) small states have a minimum level of funding, which leads to larger states having the largest cuts; and 2) the level of state loss is dependent upon how much the state spends per student.