



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 22, 2021

The Honorable Andrew Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

We write to ask you to ensure federal funding provided to New York State under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is promptly distributed to adult education and skills development programs according to their respective contracts. New York was allocated approximately \$47.6 million that became available July 1, 2020. We have heard from numerous adult education programs across New York State that this money has not been distributed promptly.

According to the most recent figures from your administration, only about 15% of the funding owed to these programs under their contracts has been received so far this contract year. A survey of adult education programs across the state found 38% of programs reported they will have to close their doors if this funding is not released. Another 52% were unsure while only 10% were confident they could remain open. These delays affect 22,670 adult students and 289 staff.

Adult education programs have said these delays have been an issue since the start of the pandemic. We understand the pandemic has presented unique administrative challenges, but Congress provides Title II funding to the state with the expectation that it is disbursed in a timely matter. These programs typically operate on very thin budgets and, as the survey shows, any delay in receiving funds endangers their ability to continue providing services to our communities.

Adult education is vitally important to combatting poverty and improving quality of life for the most vulnerable across New York. According to a study by the Program for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), 24% of New York's population can be considered "at risk" for problems using print materials. In practical terms, this means nearly one-quarter of New York's adult population does not have the reading ability to compare two or more pieces of information to make an informed decision.

During the pandemic, it is more important than ever that New York's adult population be able to digest information. We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Jacobs".

Chris Jacobs
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Garbarino".

Andrew Garbarino
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Elise M. Stefanik".

Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Reed".

Tom Reed
Member of Congress