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PAST GAINS, FUTURE GOALS (Part I)

Because we are at a transition point in Adult Education, this is a good time to engage leaders in the Adult Education field in some "futures" thinking. CAAL has asked two dozen state and national leaders to share their views on important recent gains and our highest priority challenges in the next few years. We plan to publish these ideas in a special Newsletter issue in the near future. In the meantime, we are pleased to foreshadow what is coming in a new Blog titled [Past Gains, Future Goals \(Part I\)](#), with three early contributions -- from former Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall, field advocate David Rosen, and CAAL's legislative advisor, Eugene Sofer.



NEW FOUNDATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

At this moment, CAAL understands that the bipartisan, bicameral Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA, replacing WIA) may be "tasked up" in the Senate as early as this week. The bill, in its current form, is being backed by most adult education and workforce development leaders. Last week, several other groups added their voices of support: the National Governors Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, and many other business, governmental, and education leadership organizations and associations. A [press release with links to each of those letters](#) has been placed in the CAAL website.

It should be understood that the Senate and House could introduce one or more amendments as part of the enactment process. CAAL's endorsement of the bill assumes that no substantive changes will be made but we should all be on the look-out for adjustments that could be detrimental to Adult Education (including ESL service and family literacy). We cannot affect the process of federal enactment at this stage, but we can keep a watchful eye on the process of implementation by the involved departments, especially by OCTAE in terms of providing training and technical assistance to Adult Education leaders and to the states.

Important as the federal policy and funding role is, it cannot be emphasized enough that informed and committed leadership from the states is essential going forward, because building a strong, well-funded Adult Education role is a vital part of planning to achieve state economic and community development goals.

The federal FY 2015 Appropriations process is well underway. The Senate bill includes a modest increase for Adult Education; the House has not yet acted. But Adult Education advocates can weigh in at this stage by focusing on preserving the gains in the Senate bill, and by pressing the Obama Administration for more funding for FY2016. Similar efforts are needed at the state level.

Two reports will be issued during July that will also reshape the environment for Adult Education services. One is the report of OCTAE, tentatively titled ***Making Skills Everyone's Business-A Call to Transform Adult Learning in the U.S.*** (see CAAL coverage in [ENews Issue #43](#)). The other is the White House plan that will be issued as a result of Vice President Biden's review of job training -- which is in process now and will include Adult Education. CAAL will alert readers to both reports when they are issued.



OTHER NEWS



From CAAL on the Immigration Act: Two short companion essays by CAAL Senior

Advisor Garrett Murphy highlight provisions in S.744 -- the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act -- that could be detrimental to Adult Education if not addressed. [EDUCATION ISSUES IN S.744 \(June 13, 2014\)](#) highlights the issues and questions raised for Adult Education by certain language, civics and government, and education/training provisions of S.744. The companion piece, titled [SIZE AND FLOW: Adult Education Issues in the Senate Immigration Bill \(March 3, 2014\)](#) addresses the need for understanding better than we do the number of undocumented immigrants likely to need adult education services under provisions of S.744. Both essays point to the need for adjustments in the proposed bill and in current immigration law.



In the works from the Manufacturing Institute: The Manufacturing Institute (an affiliate of the National Association of Manufacturers) has just joined with Deloitte to carry out a three-phased Skills Gap research initiative to better understand how companies are impacted by a shortage of qualified workers. The effort, designed for business leaders, builds on the Institute's "The Skills Gap in U.S. Manufacturing" report of 2011. Survey takers are being asked how their companies are affected by the shortage of qualified workers, what projections they have for such shortages through 2020, and what steps the companies are taking to deal with the issue. For further information about the Institute's pioneering skills certification work, [CLICK HERE](#).

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