

CAAL LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENT, JULY 10, 2014



WIOA ABOUT TO BECOME LAW

Some months back CAAL spoke of WIA-weariness on the part of those who have toiled for years to advance the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act (AEEGA) and to reform the vision and provisions of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

On May 21st, to the surprise of many and after weeks of nonpartisan talks, a team of eight Senate and House leaders announced their "bicameral, bipartisan" Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as a complete replacement for WIA*. These leaders were Senators Tom Harkin, Lamar Alexander, Patty Murray, and Johnny Isakson and Representatives John Kline, George Miller, Virginia Foxx, and Rubén Hinojosa.

CAAL is pleased to announce that WIOA has now passed both the Senate and House. It passed by a vote of 97-3 in the Senate on June 25th and by a vote of 415-6 in the House on July 9th. (Voting against the bill were Republican Senators Coburn (OK), Johnson (WI), and Lee (UT) and Representatives Amash (MI), Broun (GA), Duncan (TN), Jones (NC), Massie (KY), and Stockman (TX).

The bill will go in the near future to President Obama for signature, which may include a signing ceremony.

CAAL encourages its readers to express appreciation to the eight Congressional leaders named in paragraph two above, and also to Senator Jack Reed for his extraordinary and consistent

leadership on behalf of adult education. (To read Sen. Reed's eloquent statement on the occasion of the Senate WIOA vote, see top entry at <http://www.caalusa.org/lettersmedia.html>.) You might also consider thanking your elected Senate and House official for his/her vote in favor of the legislation. Keep in mind that some of them serve on Appropriations committees.

Letters and calls that ask for more funding than provided in WIOA can go to members of the relevant Senate and House Appropriations Committees and Subcommittees at <http://www.appropriations.senate.gov> and <http://appropriations.house.gov>. As soon as the bill leaves the President's desk, WIOA's enactment will be a significant achievement, a very "big deal" in the current political climate. But the challenge of inadequate funding will remain, and diligence will be required going forward to overcome the effects of sequestering and caps and the underfunded provisions of WIOA, including the grossly inadequate funding for Adult Education.

But let's first take some time for applause and celebration, and to think about new possibilities. Congratulations to leaders both inside and out of Congress for this achievement.

* Note: Details of WIOA were discussed at length in CAAL's E-News Issues #44 and #45 (<http://www.caalusa.org/ENewsPDFFiles/CAALENews44May292014.pdf> and http://www.caalusa.org/ENewsPDFFiles/CAAL_E_News45.pdf).

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