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The Honorable Ed Rendell
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120
November 16, 2009

Dear Governor Rendell:

As members of the Pennsylvania Association for Adult and Continuing Education (PAACE), we represent the interests of over 1000 professional and volunteer adult educators and tens of thousands of students from every county throughout Pennsylvania. Our Pennsylvania adult education programs are very diverse. Some are volunteer-based literacy councils, some are faith-based organizations, some are local community-based organizations, and some are embedded in local public school districts, intermediate units or colleges.

Our students are diverse as well and represent a broad range of Pennsylvania residents and citizenry. We work with many students who are trying to improve their skills in order to get jobs, retain jobs or move on to better jobs as well as transition to post-secondary education or training. These students might be working on basic reading, writing, math, English language, and even basic computer skills, but their ultimate goal is to improve the economic prospects of their families. Furthermore, they want to make certain that no child of theirs is left behind. They are parents and grandparents wanting a better life for their children. They want to participate in school improvement.

Our work is about economic development, strengthening of families, and expanding participation in the give and take of American democracy and the responsibilities incurred by that participation. And like every important work, resources are needed. Please help us to maintain our programs so that adult students can continue to have access to quality adult education programs.

In your budget last year, you included \$21.5 million for **funding for adult basic and literacy education, including family literacy**. Unfortunately, the legislative compromise only provided \$17.687 million in funding. We urge you to once again advocate for at least the \$21.5 million. The substantial decrease for Pennsylvania programs in 2009-2010 has resulted in curtailed services to students and increased waiting lists. Please return the funding for adult education to the original amount you recommended last year.

The budget you will be sending to the State Legislature is critical to the future of adult literacy programs. Please consider the need for an increase to enable Pennsylvania's adults to continue their opportunities.

Sincerely,

Diane C. Inverso
PAACE President