

# Christian Life Commission



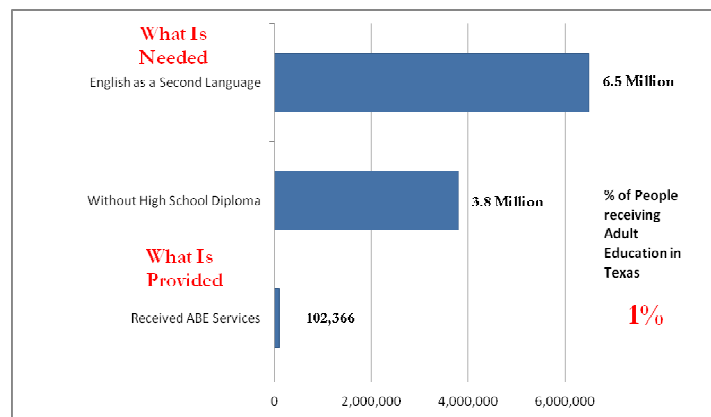
## Adult Education – Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) 81<sup>st</sup> Legislative Session

In response to the LAR from the Texas Education Agency, the House and Senate each approved an increase in funding for Adult Education. The conference committee will soon begin work reconciling the differences between the two versions of the budget. Please support **fully funding** the LAR from TEA for **\$50 million in new money** for adult education.

The House version of the budget contains a \$20 million increase in Adult Education funding in Article III and an additional \$30 million in Article XI. The Senate version contains \$50 in Article XI for Adult Education.

Basic literacy and basic technology and career skills are vital for economic success. Texans must acknowledge that investments in educational services that increase these skills are an investment in our future. Over 10 million Texans need adult educational services, yet only about 100,000 individuals receive them. In response to such figures, legislation from the 80th Texas Legislative Session called for collaboration between Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to improve the effectiveness of existing ABE programs.

An increase in funding is absolutely necessary for reaching out to the millions of Texans in need of basic education. According to the US Department of Education, it would take 45 years for Texas to equal what Florida invests in adult education in one year. The TEA has filed a Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) that includes a \$50 million dollar exceptional item increase in the ABE and Workforce Training budget item.



### How will the \$50 million dollars in additional funding be spent?

The initiative will be deployed by the three agencies as follows:

1. Establish a basic literacy competence level threshold for work skills (including basic technology proficiency);
2. Work with local workforce development boards to determine targeted English as a Second Language (ESL) literacy training integrated with vocational or job skills training. Funds will be prioritized for new hires but as additional funds become available, incumbent workers. These programs will be based upon workforce industry needs;
3. Create a career and transition counseling component to guide students in the development of career skills, placement, and postsecondary opportunities by providing both career and educational counselors to work directly with students;
4. Expand the current ABE services to simultaneously accommodate both basic literacy and workforce skills training. The agencies will work collaboratively with community colleges, technical colleges and other training providers to create curricula that integrate job skills and adult education services. This expansion should include utilization of compressed curriculum models expediting completion; and
5. Target specific high-need populations and areas of the state with high percentages of limited English proficiency, and communities affected by Hurricane Ike or other natural disasters.