

Adult Education and Literacy Network (AELN) testimony:

Greetings, my name is Ashley Griggs and I am a member of the board as well as a former student at Vermont Adult Learning. I would like to humbly request your attention on a matter that I believe is of great importance; please provide an increase of \$500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand dollars) in base funding to fill the gap between our original budget request and the actual budget last session.

The Adult Education and Literacy Network, of which Vermont Adult Learning is an integral part, catalyzes life-changing experiences. It empowers individuals, building success on a personal level and equipping students with knowledge essential for the workforce or further educational pursuits.

As an adult who once dropped out of high school, I turned to Vermont Adult Learning after seven years away from formal education. My literacy and math skills were lacking, and confidence in myself was a distant memory. Employment opportunities were scarce due to my lack of education and the absence of a diploma. Vermont Adult Learning and similar programs played a pivotal role, not just in providing essential skills but in restoring confidence. They became the bridge to fulfilling jobs and opportunities for further education.

Now, as a board member, I witness firsthand the new horizons these programs offer. Each individual's unique learning journey is embraced, recognizing that no one learns the same way. This inclusivity is what makes these programs indispensable in our community

Again, please provide an increase of \$500,000 (Five Hundred Thousand dollars) in base funding to fill the gap between our original budget request and actual budget appropriations last session.

Thank you for your time.

