

HOUSE BILL 629

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2004 Regular Session
4r2142
CF 4r1525

By: **Delegates Hixson, Bozman, C. Davis, Gordon, Healey, Howard,
Marriott, and Patterson**

Introduced and read first time: February 4, 2004

Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Adult Education and Literacy Services - Waiting List - Funding**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Governor to increase a certain appropriation in the
4 State budget for certain fiscal years for the State Department of Education to
5 distribute as Literacy Works grants in order to reduce the waiting list for certain
6 adult education and literacy services; declaring the intent of the General
7 Assembly; and generally relating to funding for adult education and literacy
8 services.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article - Education
11 Section 5-218
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2001 Replacement Volume and 2003 Supplement)

14 **Preamble**

15 WHEREAS, The economy of Maryland needs an educated workforce to be
16 competitive; and

17 WHEREAS, An estimated 613,640 Maryland adults do not have a high school
18 diploma; and

19 WHEREAS, High school dropouts who earn a high school diploma can earn an
20 extra \$7,000 in annual income; and

21 WHEREAS, The literacy level of a parent is the best predictor of a child's
22 literacy achievement; and

23 WHEREAS, The National Adult Literacy Survey reports that 20% of
24 Marylanders function at the lowest literacy level; and

25 WHEREAS, Maryland provides adult education and literacy services to only 4%
26 of the target population; and

1 WHEREAS, Each year, over 16,000 Maryland adults apply to take the GED test
2 and 45% fail the test due to lack of preparation; and

3 WHEREAS, Over 88,000 foreign-born residents who "do not speak English well"
4 or "at all" entered the State since the last census was taken; and

5 WHEREAS, 4,000 to 5,000 adults are on waiting lists for adult education and
6 literacy services annually; and

7 WHEREAS, The task force appointed by the General Assembly in 2001 to study
8 adult education-related services recommended increasing funding; now, therefore,

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
10 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

11 **Article - Education**

12 5-218.

13 (a) (1) The Department shall distribute competitive grants for adult
14 education AND LITERACY services in accordance with the State Plan for Adult
15 Education and Family Literacy.

16 (2) The grants distributed under this section shall be based on need and
17 performance.

18 (3) Grants under this section may be used for adult education and
19 literacy services, including:

20 (i) GED instruction;

21 (ii) The Maryland Adult External High School Program under §
22 7-205.1 of this article;

23 (iii) English for Speakers of Other Languages;

24 (iv) Family literacy; and

25 (v) Basic skills and literacy instruction.

26 (b) (1) [Funding] SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,
27 FUNDING for the competitive grants under this section shall be as provided in the
28 State budget.

29 (2) IN FISCAL YEARS 2006 AND 2007, THE GOVERNOR SHALL INCLUDE AN
30 APPROPRIATION IN THE STATE BUDGET EQUAL TO AN INCREASE OF \$1,474,296 OVER
31 THE FISCAL YEAR 2004 APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO DISTRIBUTE AS
32 LITERACY WORKS GRANTS IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE WAITING LIST FOR ADULT
33 EDUCATION AND LITERACY SERVICES TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.

1 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That it is the intent of the
2 General Assembly that the State Department of Education and the General Assembly
3 work together to create an ongoing method for funding adult education and literacy
4 services.

5 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
6 July 1, 2004.