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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lucy Gettman, director of advocacy
202-222-5260

READING RECOVERY COUNCIL CALLS ON CONGRESS TO CORRECT PRESIDENT’S INADEQUATE FUNDING REQUEST FOR 2007

The Reading Recovery Council of North America (RRCNA), representing educators who work with America’s lowest-performing first graders, calls on Congress to correct President Bush’s inadequate funding request for the Fiscal Year 2007 budget. “The President’s request ignores children’s fundamental educational needs and jeopardizes America’s economic competitiveness for the future,” said Executive Director Jady Johnson.

President Bush’s FY2007 budget request for education falls far short of the vision of the Reading Recovery Council of North America that children will be proficient readers and writers by the end of first grade. Educators, legislators and families across this country share our commitment to accessible and effective reading and writing instruction promised in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

The president’s request leaves behind America’s most vulnerable children and students at the elementary and secondary levels. It ignores the fundamental educational needs of children by recommending flat funding for vital programs — essentially a funding cut when inflation is taken into consideration. The erosion of support for key programs jeopardizes students, educators and communities that depend on a literate and well educated workforce:

Program	Purpose	FY2007 Funding Request
IDEA State Grant	Educates children and youth with disabilities	\$10.7 billion—1% token increase recommended
Title I	Enhances academic success for disadvantaged students	\$12.7 billion—Flat funding recommended at FY2006 level
Title II	Enhances teacher and principal quality	\$2.8 billion—Flat funding recommended at FY2006 level
Title III	Assists students in our increasingly diverse nation to learn and thrive with English language skills and comprehension	\$669 million —Flat funding recommended at FY2006 level
Title V	Provides flexible funding to states and local districts for innovative education programs, including reform and improvement initiatives	\$99 million—Flat funding recommendation at FY2006 level

A strong federal investment in programs authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act is crucial. RRCNA calls on Congress to pass a budget resolution that increases domestic discretionary spending so that the Appropriations Committees for Labor–HHS–Education can make a meaningful investment in education and America’s future.