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LIUNA Launches “Build America 2010” To Get the U.S. Working Again

***National Effort Will Solidify Support in U.S. Senate for Sorely
Needed Transportation, Water Resources and Energy Investments***

**Effort Includes Informing Public with Billboards Ahead of Structurally
Deficient Bridges, Radio Ads, Mobilization of LIUNA’s Half-Million Members**

Washington, D.C. (May 17, 2010) – LIUNA – the Laborers’ International Union of North America – today announced the launch of ***“Build America 2010,”*** a comprehensive, member and media driven effort to open the doors in the U.S. Senate for jobs-creating investment that puts men and women back to work building the critical infrastructure of America.

“America was made great by workers who built what was once the world’s greatest transportation system, energy systems, water resources and public facilities. For too long we have let the backbone of the nation fall into disrepair,” said LIUNA General President Terry O’Sullivan. “Now is the time to change that. There are 2 million construction workers searching for work and our nation has tremendous backlog of work to do. We can build America, put men and women back to work and leave behind a positive legacy and real assets for taxpayers and future generations.”

Build America 2010 will launch Tuesday, May 18 in Colorado with appeals for help from Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall and, shortly after, will launch in other states across the U.S. Other potential states include Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Massachusetts and others.

The effort features a bold, multi-faceted media campaign, including high-impact billboards placed ahead of and after structurally deficient bridges, radio ads, online ads and other outreach. Most importantly, the union will mobilize its half-million members – who, like millions of workers in the construction industry, have been devastated by the current economy – to lobby their elected officials, write letters to media, join with community allies around the need to build America and to unite with fellow members in the fight for good jobs.

One key focus of Build America 2010 will be passage of a new Surface Transportation Bill – the single biggest job-creation vehicle available to Congress and critical to national competitiveness. Another critical need is reauthorization of the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts.

O’Sullivan said good legislation that builds America routinely moves through the U.S. House and would be signed by President Obama were it not for some members of the U.S. Senate.

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“We will bring our message directly to the senators who are in a position to make this happen,” O’Sullivan continued. “We want them to join with us in this cause for good jobs and believe they will. For those who don’t, we will ask them to answer for their constituents, ‘Are you for the status quo or are you for putting America back to work?’ ”

Build America 2010 kicks off as America finds itself facing a \$2.2 trillion gap between current investment and what’s required to bring the country’s fundamentals to a point that will allow it to remain globally competitive. The problems facing the country’s vital systems include:

- 161,892 bridges – 27 percent – are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.
- A third of major roads are in mediocre or poor condition and 36 percent of major urban highways are stretched beyond capacity.
- 1,819 dams are high-hazard, meaning they risk property and lives.
- Each day, 7 billion gallons of clean drinking water is lost to leaking pipes.
- Every year, 10 billion gallons of raw sewage is released due to sanitary sewer overflows.
- Excessive dependence on foreign oil, which could be abated in part by construction of nuclear power plants.

“Building America can close our nation’s competitiveness deficit, it can close the jobs deficit, and it can truly get our economy moving again, which is what it will take to close the national deficit,” O’Sullivan said. “Every day the Senate delays, the cost to taxpayers rises and the cost to families in lost jobs, lost homes and lost dreams escalates.”

O’Sullivan said the Obama Administration’s American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which continues to support and create jobs, was a strong step in the right direction, and the goal of Build America 2010 is to keep that momentum going.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, delay has caused the taxpayer tab for taking care of the basics of the country to soar 69 percent between 2001 and today –from \$1.3 trillion to \$2.2 trillion.

For more information about Build America 2010, visit www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.org. For information on Build Colorado 2010, visit www.BuildColorado2010.org.

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The half-million members of LIUNA – the Laborers’ International Union of North America – are on the forefront of the construction industry, a powerhouse of workers who are proud to build America.