

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jaclyn Macek Houser, 517-420-4372 or jmacek@liuna.org

Laborers' International Union Applauds Winners in \$452 Million "Retrofit Ramp-Up" Federal Stimulus Grant Program

*LIUNA Offers Breakthrough Model for Weatherization Worker Training;
Partners With Local Programs on Several Winning Proposals to Make Energy
Efficiency, Job Creation Goals a Reality*

Washington, DC (April 21, 2010) – At a White House press conference today, Vice President Biden and the U.S. Department of Energy announced the winners of a \$452 million "Retrofit Ramp-Up" grant program – several of which received support from LIUNA in developing their proposals.

The stimulus funds were awarded on a competitive basis to 25 community-scale projects across the country for demonstrating sustainable business plans to "ramp-up" energy saving efforts, weatherize a large percentage of homes and businesses in their communities, and put Americans back to work in good-paying jobs.

LIUNA – The Laborers' International Union of North America – partnered with several of the award winners, providing strategic advice on a variety of proposal requirements including plans for worker training, language on labor and quality assurance standards, outreach to contractors, and guidance on ways to leverage both public and private financing in the home retrofit industry.

LIUNA has created a breakthrough home energy retrofit training program that was cited as a model in several proposals. With nationwide training centers and new courses in weatherization and green construction, LIUNA's program – which exceeds the Department of Energy's national training standards – provides workers with the training and credentials in highly-skilled, family-supporting jobs as weatherization installers, supervisors, and energy auditors.

"LIUNA is proud to collaborate and assist community partners that are working to solve our country's energy crisis and create jobs," said LIUNA General President Terry O'Sullivan. **"In Ramp-Up locations and across the country, we're ready to be a part of the solution by training a new weatherization workforce of skilled workers who will do the job right and ensure American tax dollars are spent wisely."**

LIUNA's training program is poised to recruit and instruct workers on the scale needed, not just in Ramp-Up locations, but nationwide. Trainees from LIUNA's program are already on the job making homes more energy-efficient in Delaware, Mississippi, Nevada, New York, New Jersey, Oregon and Washington, DC.

Seattle resident Long Vo is one of those LIUNA trainees. **"LIUNA's weatherization training program gave me the skills for a family-supporting job,"** said Vo. Even though Vo isn't working yet, he sees the Ramp-Up announcement as an opportunity: **"I'm trained and ready to go to work in a**

weatherization job. This should give me a chance to build a better life for myself and improve my community.” Seattle received a \$20 million award.

Beyond training, LIUNA has been working with partners such as local utility companies, the Sierra Club and Conservation Services Group to sponsor of the “Clean Energy Roadshow” – a cross-country tour that brings together elected officials, business leaders, labor representatives and environmentalists to identify ways to spur public-private investment in a new weatherization industry. The Roadshow provided an organizational tool for crafting Ramp-Up proposals, and several Roadshow locations also received awards.

The Retrofit Ramp-Up Program is part of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, and is newly funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Along with other DOE programs such as the low-income Weatherization Assistance Program, the Ramp-Up program invests \$452 million to help meet the Obama Administration’s goal of retrofitting one million homes a year in the next decade. The program is expected to produce an annual savings of \$100 million in utility bills for households and business and create 30,000 jobs nationwide in the next three years.

For more information on LIUNA’s weatherization training program please visit:

<http://www.liunabuildsamerica.org/weatherize>.

To view a list of winning Retrofit Ramp-Up locations please visit:

http://www.energy.gov/news/documents/Retrofit_Ramp-Up_Project_List.pdf.

###

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.