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LIUNA Launches Effort to Increase Investment for Good “Build America” Jobs in Economic Recovery Plan

Member Mobilization to be Supported by TV Ads Telling Senators to Support A Recovery Plan that Puts More People Back to Work Instead of Giving More Handouts to the Rich

“Working Americans need paychecks, not stimulus checks”

Washington, D.C. (January 27, 2009) – LIUNA – the Laborers’ International Union of North America – today launched an effort to increase the share of job-creating investment in the economic recovery plan under consideration in Congress. The effort by LIUNA, with a half-million members, will include intense member mobilization, supported by TV ads initially in Washington, D.C. and four states.

LIUNA General President Terence M. O’Sullivan will deliver automated phone messages to members, allowing them to immediately patch-through to the office of their Senator. This effort will be supported by TV ads, which will air in Nevada, Kentucky, Tennessee, Iowa and Washington, D.C. Additional markets may be added.

As the bill currently stands in Congress, less than 20 percent of the \$825 billion cost will directly create jobs.

LIUNA has called the economic recovery proposal a major step forward, dedicating badly needed resources to building America, including its roads, bridges, transit systems, schoolhouses and energy systems. However, the union believes at least a third of the package should directly create “build America” jobs.

“The current proposal is true progress, but falls short,” O’Sullivan said. “It fails to fully take advantage of the opportunity to put America back to work building the essential and long neglected basics of our country, which would leave behind real assets for future generations.”

LIUNA’s ads feature construction workers speaking about their struggles in the current economic crisis and the need to create good jobs building America.

Unemployment in the construction industry currently stands at 15.3 percent, with 1.4 million men and women jobless. At the same time, the American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that due to years of neglect, the nation’s critical infrastructure is in need of a \$1.6 trillion investment. In addition to addressing the needs crucial to the nation’s competitiveness, creating construction jobs would reach many of the working middle class most hurt by the economic crisis, and would quickly create income that would circulate through communities.

“Working Americans need paychecks, not stimulus checks and certainly not handouts for corporations which helped caused this crisis,” O’Sullivan said.

The current proposal includes billions of dollars in handouts in the form of a three-year loss carry back extension, which would allow corporations to get tax refunds for their losses for five years instead of the current two years. Corporate homebuilders, which contributed to the current crisis by overheating the housing market through overbuilding and steering homebuyers to risky mortgages, would stand to gain at least \$15 billion.

Based on U.S. Transportation Department formulas, a \$15 billion investment in our nation's transportation system would support 522,000 jobs.

"We believe Congress should take this opportunity to create as many family-supporting jobs as possible," O'Sullivan said.

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The 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. To learn more about LIUNA's Build America, so America Works - a long-term effort to make taking care of America's basics a national priority - go to www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.org.