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Contact Meghan O'Shaughnessy at (703) 302-8383, (202) 577-5661 or meghan@tigercomm.us

D.C. Home Weatherized for Free to Kick-off Breakthrough National Green Jobs Training Program

Pre-Labor Day LIUNA Event Highlights Potential to Create Good Jobs and Save Energy by Weatherizing Millions of Poorly Insulated Homes

Washington, D.C. – Members of LIUNA – the Laborers International Union of North America – weatherized the home of a young Washington, D.C. couple today for free. This pre-Labor Day energy efficiency demonstration kicked off LIUNA's nationwide training program that could employ tens of thousands of American workers in the emerging weatherization industry being fueled by federal economic recovery investments.

LIUNA General President Terry O'Sullivan led Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope and several D.C. Councilmembers on a tour of the weatherization work being done on the home of Chuck Roberts and Amy Vruno. The couple is forced to live on a fixed income in their aging home. During the tour, LIUNA training instructors oversaw a group of LIUNA apprentices putting their new weatherization skills to work, which included insulating the home's windows and walls and wrapping the hot-water heater.

“As we approach Labor Day nearly one in 10 workers is unemployed. LIUNA's breakthrough national training program will make it possible to put tens of thousands of people to work doing skilled weatherization on millions of energy-inefficient homes,” said LIUNA General President O'Sullivan. **“Our program has the potential to create family-supporting jobs, save homeowners money on their energy bills, help free our nation from foreign oil and protect the environment. It's a win-win, no matter how you look at it.”**

There are an estimated 100 million poorly insulated American homes, but no industry to meet a need of this scale. The growing demand for weatherization work is going to require a large industry, driven by trained, skilled workers who will do the work well and ensure that America's weatherization investment is spent wisely. LIUNA is ready to meet that demand by training a skilled American weatherization workforce.

“Weatherization saves money for families and creates jobs in our communities,” said Sierra Club Executive Director Pope. **“Making one home more energy efficient should save that household about \$350 per year. Clean energy training programs like those through LIUNA provide workers with hard skills for maximizing energy savings. This clean energy revolution will bring opportunity for communities throughout Washington, D.C. and the country.”**

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The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested \$5 billion to expand the Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program and meet the Obama Administration's goal of weatherizing one million homes a year. This is a nearly 10-fold increase in the amount typically invested in weatherizing poorly insulated homes. By fixing energy inefficient homes, we can save the equivalent of 500 million barrels of oil a year and save homeowners \$3.5 billion a year in energy costs (an average of \$350 per homeowner).

“Weatherization captures the twin goals of economic and environmental sustainability,” said D.C. Councilmember Mary Cheh. **“There is tremendous potential here to expand the District's economy while providing much needed jobs to our residents. I am pleased that LIUNA has chosen the District for this program and is working to ensure that the training process will turn short-term investments into long-term economic gain.”**

LIUNA members are already on the job making homes more energy efficient in New York and New Jersey. Job opportunities for LIUNA weatherization workers are expected to develop quickly in Delaware, Washington State and Oregon -- and soon throughout the country.

“LIUNA's training program is giving me the skills I need to get started on a good career path that will help me provide for my three children,” said Rashay, a single mother and one of the Washington, D.C. LIUNA apprentices who worked on the home today. **“I enjoy the hands-on work, and I also feel like I am able to contribute to my community.”**

LIUNA's standardized national weatherization model exceeds the Department of Energy's weatherization assistance program standards. LIUNA relies on experienced instructors who provide trainees with a broad set of weatherization and construction skills and credentials as Technicians/Installers, Weatherization Supervisors and Energy Auditors. LIUNA workers will be credentialed and they'll set the standard for the new weatherization industry. Green for All (www.greenforall.org) and Good Jobs First (www.goodjobsfirst.org) have highlighted LIUNA's weatherization model as an example of weatherization work done right.

For more information on LIUNA's weatherization training program please visit <http://www.liunabuildsamerica.org/weatherize>.

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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.