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**“Retrofit Roadshow” Rolls into Portland**

***National Tour Aims to Foster Public-Private Investment in a New American Weatherization Industry***

**Portland, ME** – Governor John Baldacci and officials from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) were among the prominent state and national leaders who convened on the Southern Maine Community College campus today as part of a “Retrofit Roadshow.” The Roadshow brings elected officials, business leaders, labor union representatives and environmental advocates together to identify ways to spur collaborative public-private investment in a new American weatherization industry.

Retrofitting the estimated 100 million energy inefficient American homes will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs, reduce household energy costs by \$3.5 billion a year (an average of \$350 per homeowner) and save the equivalent of 500 million barrels of oil annually. Right now, however, there simply isn't the infrastructure in place to meet this potential.

Part of the Roadshow involved members of LIUNA – the Laborers' International Union of North America – demonstrating elements of a home energy efficiency retrofit out of their mobile training unit, including insulating windows and doors. LIUNA has designed a breakthrough national program to train thousands of workers in communities across the country to do skilled energy efficiency retrofits, in order to meet the demand for a skilled weatherization workforce. LIUNA trainees learn detailed weatherization skills at LIUNA's nationwide network of training centers, and have the opportunity to advance in family-supporting careers.

**“LIUNA's national weatherization training program will help make it possible to put tens of thousands of people to work doing skilled weatherization on millions of energy-inefficient homes. With one-in-10 American workers currently unemployed, that could make a real difference,”** said Armand E. Sabitoni, LIUNA's General Secretary-Treasurer and New England Regional Manager. **“Together we can 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 no matter how you look at it.”**

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, but it is still not enough to fix all of the nation's energy inefficient homes. DOE recently announced that it will be allocating over \$400 million in competitive energy efficiency grants, which could help fund weatherization projects in cities like Portland and around the country. The Retrofit Roadshow aims to close the remaining investment gap and identify ways to ramp up both public *and* private investment in America's weatherization industry, including “pay-as-you-save” models, utility partnerships, bonds and pension fund investments.

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**“There is an urgent need to retrofit America’s homes and buildings for the 21st century with continued investment in low-income weatherization assistance and innovative new programs that make home energy makeovers affordable for everyone,”** said Sierra Club Maine leader and Chair of Maine Partners for Cool Communities Joan Saxe. **“In order to weatherize America's homes and address global warming pollution, we need robust collaboration between labor, business and community leaders, public and private sectors. Maine is leading the way.”**

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

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