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## **On Labor Day, LIUNA Calls on Congress to Invest in Building America to Create Jobs and Rescue Our Economy**

*Build America 2010 Kicks Off In Pennsylvania on Holiday Weekend, in Ohio Next Week, All On Heels of Campaigns in Five Other States*

### **A Key Goal is to Develop Champions in U.S. Senate for Jobs-Creating Surface Transportation and Clean Water Bills**

**Washington, D.C. (Sept. 2, 2010)** – This Labor Day, LIUNA – the Laborers’ International Union of North America – calls on Congress to invest in creating jobs that help fix the deteriorating critical infrastructure of the U.S. and improve our economy while leaving behind real assets for taxpayers and future generations.

“For millions of working men and women, this Labor Day is no holiday,” said LIUNA General President Terry O’Sullivan. “Depression level unemployment lingers in the construction industry. Millions of men and women are ready, willing and able to go to work building our country. With our roads, bridges, water resources and other basics of the nation falling behind, there is tremendous work to do. All that is missing is the leadership and will in Congress.”

LIUNA launched Build America 2010 in Colorado earlier this year, and has since launched state-level efforts in Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland and Connecticut. On Labor Day in Pittsburgh, thousands of workers will unite behind the message that it’s time to put people back to work, and on Wednesday in Cleveland, LIUNA members will join business and community allies, along with Senator Sherwood Brown in calling for investment in the state’s critical infrastructure. Additional state campaigns, including in Virginia and New York, will be launched in the near future.

The strategy behind Build America 2010 is to develop champions in the U.S. Senate for legislation that creates jobs building the basics of the nation.

A key priority is passage of a new Surface Transportation Bill – the biggest job-creating legislation in the country. This bill will provide the major resources for bridge, highway and other transportation infrastructure. Passage of a new bill has been stalled for nearly a year, keeping the downward pressure on the construction industry. In addition, Build America 2010 is fighting for passage of legislation to care for the nation’s aging wastewater and drinking water systems, public facilities such as school buildings, and our energy systems.

The Build America effort is member-driven and media-driven. In each state-level campaign, LIUNA members have reached out to their elected officials for help, attended rallies, and pledged to continue the fight for creating good jobs and taking care of the country.

As a “conversation starter” for the campaigns, LIUNA has sponsored billboards ahead of deficient bridges to inform motorists and appeal to Senators. In addition, LIUNA is using radio and online ads to raise awareness.

“The need to build America goes beyond the current jobs crisis,” O’Sullivan said. “If our nation is to remain competitive in the global economy and have the ability to create good jobs for future generations, we must address our dire infrastructure issues.”

While developing nations build new superhighways and bullet train systems, the U.S. is falling behind. China, for example, invests 10 percent of their GDP in infrastructure, compared with only 2 percent investment in the U.S.

Across America:

- 161,892 bridges – 27 percent of all bridges – are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.
- A third of major roads are in less than good condition and 36 percent of major urban highways are stretched beyond capacity.
- Every day, 7 billion gallons of clean drinking water is lost to leaking pipes, and 850 billion gallons of sewage overflows each year.
- There are 1,743 high-hazard dams – those which need work and would threaten life and property if they failed.
- Almost a third of public school students attend over-crowded facilities.
- Our electrical grid is outdated, costing at least \$25 billion a year in lost energy. Meanwhile, the full potential of nuclear power remains untapped.

In addition to its Build America effort, LIUNA is working to strengthen its member activism and political and organizing efforts.

- LIUNA will re-affiliate with the AFL-CIO on October 1, to help unify the union movement and strengthen the influence working people have in Washington, D.C.
- LIUNA has continued to expand the unprecedented member activism seen during the 2008 election. This fall, LIUNA members will work hard on behalf of candidates who support creating good jobs for working men and women.
- Efforts to organize workers in new sectors have continued, with aggressive campaigns to bring residential construction workers basic protections and benefits. And with a

breakthrough home weatherization training program that provides workers with high-quality training and career-advancement opportunities in this emerging industry, LIUNA has been leading the charge to make sure these jobs are not just “green” jobs but also good, family-supporting jobs.

- As men and women return from combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, LIUNA has been working with organizations like Helmets to Hardhats and Veterans Green Jobs to give veterans a helping hand, training them for jobs here at home and working with veteran-owned contractors to find them work.

For more information on LIUNA, go to [www.liuna.org](http://www.liuna.org). For more information on the Build America effort, visit [www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.org](http://www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.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.*