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Statement of Terry O'Sullivan, General President, Laborers' International Union of North America

Washington, D.C. (July 6, 2010) -- LIUNA commends President Obama on his efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

The American labor movement has always been a refuge for workers from other nations and cultures seeking the American dream.

The men and women of LIUNA are committed to preventing unscrupulous employers from exploiting undocumented workers and driving down living standards for all Americans.

Only through comprehensive immigration reform, which allows workers seeking a better life to participate legally in the American economy, can we hope to put an end to the abusive practices of the worst employers to fix our country's broken immigration system.

Agents of hatred continue to use fears in these uncertain economic times to peddle intolerance for their political gain. It is immoral and un-American to suggest that the government should round up millions of hard-working men and women for deportation—dividing families and disrupting neighborhoods.

LIUNA stands with the President, and those in Congress who are ready to deal with this issue, to aggressively push a comprehensive immigration reform package that:

- Protects all workers with strong labor laws so that employers cannot use a worker's status as an excuse to drive down wages and working conditions.
- Strengthens border security by allocating adequate border security resources.
- Create a fair path, which includes criminal background check, to earned legalization and citizenship for the millions of undocumented workers who are already here, paying taxes, and contributing to our economy, our culture and our communities.
- Protects families from being separated by our immigration laws, and decreases the backlog of families awaiting reunification.
- Ends the abusive guest worker programs of the past which handcuff workers to an employer without the right to change jobs, and provides wage and safety protections and the freedom to join together with co-workers to improve conditions.

The time to pass immigration reform is now and we commend the President's initiative on this issue.

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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.