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Statement of Terence M. O'Sullivan, General President of LIUNA, On the Spiraling Loss of Jobs

Unemployment reaches 12.7% in key sector of the economy

“We cannot stand idly by as America shuts down”

Washington, D.C. (December 5, 2008) – Today’s jobs report, showing the worst November unemployment rate among construction workers since 1992, once again sounds the alarm to put workers back to work building America.

In communities across the country, major projects continue to come to halt. We cannot stand idly by as America shuts down. It’s time to get our economy back on track and people back to work building America.

The report released today by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that more than 1.2 million construction workers are out of work. Construction unemployment is now at 12.7%, more than double the rate of a year ago. In the last month, 82,000 construction jobs – a key driver of our economy – were lost, marking the 17th consecutive month with significant job loss in the construction industry. In all, 774,000 construction jobs have been lost since the start of 2007.

America needs an economic stimulus package that matches the size of our economic crisis. We have tried bailouts and stimulus checks to no avail. Working people need paychecks.

Economic stimulus initiatives should dedicate at least a third of total resources to creating jobs building America. Construction jobs are good jobs, circulating income in communities, while leaving behind the transportation, education and energy systems our nation needs to compete globally.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, every billion dollars of federal investment supports 34,800 good jobs. There are thousands crucial projects around the country that are ready to go and would create jobs now. By investing in the basics of our country, we can build America so America works.

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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 10 million workers who 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.