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Contact: Jacob Hay, 202-942-2285 or [jhay@liuna.org](mailto:jhay@liuna.org)

## **LIUNA Joins Business and Transportation Organizations to Make Taking Care of Nation's Transportation Foundation a National Priority**

### ***Challenge to Candidates for Office: Build America so America Works***

**Washington, D.C. (June 23, 2008)** – LIUNA – the Laborers' International Union of North America – joined with a coalition of business and transportation organizations today, calling on candidates for office and elected officials to make taking care of the nation's transportation foundation a national priority.

The coalition, Americans for Transportation Mobility, launched its *FasterBetterSafer* campaign, a nationwide effort to invest in America's roadways, bridges and public transportation systems that working people and the nation depend on every day.

Due to years of neglect, decaying and congested highways and roadways now waste 2.9 billion gallons of gas and 4.3 billion hours of commuting time a year, at an estimated annual cost of \$78 billion, or more than \$400 for every motorist. Neglect not only costs time and money – experts believe that uncared for roadways contribute to as many as a third of the nation's 42,000 traffic fatalities.

The *FasterBetterSafer* effort complements LIUNA's *Build America so America Works* initiative to create a new vision of how to care for all of America's basic infrastructure, including its transportation system, waterways and schoolhouses.

“At no other time have so many diverse individuals and organizations coalesced around the need to build America,” said LIUNA General President, Terence M. O’Sullivan. “We are all arriving at this point from different perspectives but we are here as Americans first who believe that the next president and the next Congress must lead the effort to build America so America works.”

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the basics of America are in crisis with \$1.6 trillion needed over the next five years to bring them up to satisfactory condition.

“We can build America if we redirect the resources to basic priorities instead of nickel and diming this challenge,” O’Sullivan said. “We are a country that has always tackled the big challenges – from building the first interstate highway system or the Golden Gate Bridge to landing a man on the moon – and this is a challenge that can be met.”

Building America can also create sustainable jobs providing short-term and long-term economic stimulus. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, 34,000 construction jobs were lost last month and 440,000 construction jobs have been lost since the start of 2007. A commitment to build America can reverse that trend -- the U.S. Department of Transportation says 47,500 good jobs are created for every billion dollars of investment.

“LIUNA members and millions of construction workers like them are ready to Build America. It’s what they do and they are proud to do it – let’s let them do it,” said O’Sullivan.

LIUNA’s *Build America so America Works* initiative includes member mobilization, ongoing advertising to reach elected officials and opinion leaders, a new website, [www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.org](http://www.LiunaBuildsAmerica.org), and The Petition to Build America, with a goal of 1 million voices telling Congress and the country’s next president to “build America so America works.

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*The half-million members of LIUNA are on the forefront of the construction industry, a powerhouse of 10 million workers who build America.*