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Contact: David Miller at (202) 942-2285, (202) 413-1775 or [davidmiller@liuna.org](mailto:davidmiller@liuna.org);  
Carolyn Bobb at (240) 393-7030 or [cbobb@malaborers.org](mailto:cbobb@malaborers.org)

## **LIUNA's Build Pennsylvania 2010 Expands Aggressively With Pittsburgh Area Billboards**

### ***Motorists Warned of Structurally Deficient Bridges Ahead, Urged to Contact Lawmakers***

**Pittsburgh, Pa. (October 21, 2010)** – LIUNA – the Laborers' International Union of North America – announced today an aggressive expansion of its Build Pennsylvania campaign to fight for federal and state investments which would address the state's critical transportation infrastructure needs and create hundreds of thousands of jobs.

Beginning Monday, motorists in and around Pittsburgh will see billboards placed near some of the 5,646 structurally deficient bridges in Pennsylvania. These billboards warn motorists about the condition of the bridge they're driving on and urge them to contact state leaders and U.S. senators to ask them to build Pennsylvania and create jobs.

Billboard images and initial locations are available at [BuildPennsylvania2010.org](http://BuildPennsylvania2010.org).

"Our state's bridges are falling apart and our roads are among the most congested in the country. Meanwhile, Pennsylvania has lost 45,000 construction jobs since 2008," said Philip Ameris, president and business manager of the Laborers' District Council of Western Pennsylvania. "Men and women want to go to work building Pennsylvania, and there's plenty of work to be done. We need our leaders here and in Washington to invest in our future and create jobs now."

The billboards are a "conversation starter" focused on investing in other basics as well, including water resources and school facilities. A crucial first step is passage of a Surface Transportation Bill, which has been stalled in Congress. Passage of a six-year bill which fully invests in roads, bridges and transit – a key goal of the Build America effort – recently won the support of President Obama.

Pennsylvania's problems are part of a broader national crisis that is only getting worse. According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the taxpayer tab for taking care of the basics of the country soared 69 percent between 2001 and today – from \$1.3 trillion to \$2.2 trillion, and increases with every delay.

In addition, avoiding the issue diminishes the ability of the state – and of the country – to compete. While nations such as China are investing nearly 10 percent of the gross domestic

product in super-highways, bullet trains and other fundamentals, the U.S. has fallen behind, investing less than 2 percent.

“Our roads, bridges and other basics have gone neglected for far too long, and investing in them is the best tool we have for job creation and ensuring long-term economic growth, both for Pennsylvania and the entire country,” said Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, who also co-chairs Building America’s Future and leads the Team Pennsylvania Foundation. “Efforts like Build Pennsylvania are absolutely essential to getting our government to act and make the investments our state, our nation and our working men and women need to move forward in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

Build Pennsylvania, which kicked off Labor Day weekend, will also expand to other forms of outreach, including online and radio, and the mobilization of LIUNA members in Pennsylvania, who will reach out to key state and federal officials to build support for needed legislation, including the Surface Transportation Bill.

LIUNA’s efforts have also been endorsed by a broad range of groups, including the Sierra Club, the Associated General Contractors of America and Build America’s Schools.

“Our transportation system is in decay and desperately needs more investment,” said Rich Barcaskey, executive director of the Constructors Association of Western Pennsylvania. “Temporary extensions are no way to deal with this problem. I am glad to see LIUNA advocating a long-term approach that will create jobs and get our economy back on track.”

In addition to deteriorating bridges, the problems facing Pennsylvania’s critical infrastructure are many:

- According to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, 149 miles of river and 6,110 lake-acres are polluted due to water system failures.
- More than one-third of Pennsylvania’s public school facilities are in fair or poor condition according to the state Department of Education’s 2008 School Facility Report.
- Road congestion nationally costs motorists \$2.7 billion a year, particularly in major metropolitan areas such as Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

“We can’t put off investment any longer if we want our state and our country to remain economically competitive,” Ameris said. “By investing in Pennsylvania, we can create jobs now and build a foundation for the future. It’s a no-brainer – we just need our political leaders to step up and make it happen.”

The Build America effort has also kicked off in several other states, including Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Colorado and Connecticut.

For more information about Build Pennsylvania 2010, visit [www.BuildPennsylvania2010.org](http://www.BuildPennsylvania2010.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.*