



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LIUNA General President Brent Booker's Statement on Permitting Reform

Washington, D.C. (October 2, 2026) — On behalf of the 540,000 members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), I commend Chairman Capito and Ranking Member Whitehouse of the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee and Chairman Lee and Ranking Member Heinrich of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, and their staff, for reaching a monumental bipartisan permitting reform bill, *the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026* (S. 5653).

From fossil fuels to renewables, LIUNA is America's energy union. LIUNA represents skilled construction workers whose livelihoods depend on a strong pipeline of safe, well-planned infrastructure projects. Yet, time and time again projects are delayed or canceled due to an outdated and ambiguous permitting process. That translates to tens of billions of dollars of lost investment and, more importantly, tens of thousands of job opportunities for LIUNA members, forever gone.

Congress has considered countless permitting reforms over the years, only to see them fall short. S. 5653 represents a real opportunity to break that cycle. The bill provides proper judicial review timelines, narrows the scope of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and makes it more transparent, provides clarity and significant improvements to the water quality certificate process, and provides long-overdue project certainty so that our members finally do not have to worry about elected officials killing their jobs simply to fulfill a self-serving political agenda.

For LIUNA, the key consideration is whether a permitting package will translate to good union jobs, with prevailing wages and robust apprenticeship opportunities. S.5653 exceeds those standards while maintaining proper regulations and safeguards that protect both our members on the job as well as the local communities in which projects take place. Moreover, it will lower energy costs for all Americans at a time when prices of everyday living expenses are at an all-time high.

For more than a decade LIUNA has testified before Congress, submitted comments, participated in roundtables, and endorsed numerous iterations of permitting bills only to see every effort and attempt fail in final hours of the congressional calendar. Congress has another opportunity to get this done. We urge lawmakers in both parties to seize this moment, pass the Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act of 2026, and finally deliver meaningful permitting reform. It is time to stop making permitting reform the Groundhog Day of Congress.

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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 the U.S. and Canada.

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