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As Change to Win Backs Senator Obama for President, LIUNA Abstains to Allow Internal Endorsement Process to Continue

Washington, D.C. (February 21, 2008) -- In line with its endorsement process, Change to Win unions representing two-thirds of the federation's membership voted today to back Senator Barack Obama for President, while LIUNA abstained from the vote in order to allow its internal endorsement process to continue.

LIUNA General President Terence M. O'Sullivan made this statement following the Change to Win vote:

Senator Obama has proven himself to be a champion for working people and the membership of our union, as has Senator Hillary Clinton. We abstained from the vote in order to continue with our union's endorsement process.

We have said for several months that a LIUNA endorsement would be a membership endorsement and would come when 60 percent of members are united behind a candidate. Since last fall we have reached out to thousands of members with the first national union webcast of Democratic candidates, more than a quarter million robo calls and text messages urging members to get involved in the process and two independent, random sample membership surveys.

The surveys show that while members are strongly united in wanting a Democrat in the White House who will address economic issues and help create jobs, they generally mirror the public in candidate preference with no one candidate earning 60 percent support.

A third membership survey will be conducted next week.

We will continue to inform and engage members around issues that matter – issues like taking care of the basics in our country and rebuilding America. And when members are united behind a candidate, that candidate will have the full support of the half-million strong LIUNA army.

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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 10 million workers who produce 5 percent of the U.S. economic output.