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Report: 13,000 New Construction Jobs Expected at Port of Los Angeles as State Unemployment Hits 11.6%

Report Calls for a Policy that Would Ensure Good Jobs at the Port of LA While the US Department of Labor Looks at a Similar LA Policy as National Model

(Los Angeles) – On Friday, June 19th, the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) released a report which estimates that 13,700 jobs would be created over the next several years at the Port of Los Angeles. In a period of economic struggle for thousands of working families in Los Angeles, LAANE's report details the recovery that could result from ensuring that these jobs provide pathways into the middle class through a policy similar to the one passed by the L.A. City Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) last year referred to as the Construction Careers Project Stabilization Policy (CCPSP). LAANE is calling for the passage of a CCPSP which would ensure that local residents will be eligible for these construction jobs at the Port. The policy will also guarantee high job standards so that these jobs would move local families into the middle class.

A concurrent web conference sponsored by the US Department of Labor is studying the Construction Careers Policy at the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency, which was passed by the Los Angeles City Council in 2008. The web conference is to discuss the policy as a national model in the wake of President Obama's executive order encouraging Project Labor Agreements on projects receiving federal funding. The CCPSP was endorsed by the Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council, LAANE, the L.A. County Federation of Labor and a coalition of community, religious and business advocates. The CCPSP is reshaping the way developers who receive funding from the LA CRA interact with their local communities by ensuring that local residents are hired for construction jobs and that those jobs provide good wages, health care benefits and a pension.

"This policy can make a huge impact on someone like me," says Moses Cruz, a fifth-year apprentice with Ironworkers Local 416. "Because of the economy, no one is building right now so I've been unemployed for five months. My family is living off of my savings right now and the only reason I was able to put money away was because I made good middle class wages as a union ironworker before I got laid off. If it weren't for my union job, I'd have nothing backing me up right now—more reason why these jobs at the port need to be good jobs."

LAANE and its allies hope to achieve the same success at the Port of Los Angeles. "We know these jobs are coming, and they will serve as our own economic stimulus package. But they need to be the right kind of jobs—good-paying and local," said Councilwoman Janice Hahn, whose district includes the Port.

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Coming on the heels of the state Employment Development Department's release of unemployment data for May 2009—data which shows California unemployment still stands at 11.6%--the LAANE report contends that the Construction Careers program would bring good jobs to people who can't easily access middle-class career paths and would increase the earnings of workers with barriers to employment by \$72 million dollars over the course of their apprenticeship programs.

To view the report please visit www.laane.org

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*The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO is the chartered Central Labor Council (CLC) of the AFL-CIO in Los Angeles County and is the second largest in the country, representing over 800,000 workers through over 350 unions. Its mission is to promote a voice for workers so they can remain in the middle class, move themselves out of poverty by joining a union, encourage active participation in the political process by electing pro-union and pro-worker officials and to advance public policies that support workers and their families. As the coordinating center for labor's political activity, the Federation believes that in educating and mobilizing workers to be politically active they can create and sustain healthy communities, and **FIGHT FOR GOOD JOBS** that **REBUILD THE LOS ANGELES MIDDLE CLASS**. Visit the Federation at www.launionaflcio.org.*

Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE) has been in the forefront of the economic justice movement in L.A. since 1994. LAANE is known for its broad-based labor/community coalitions and its combination of organizing, research, communications, and policy development. LAANE led the movement to pass a Living Wage Ordinance in the city of Los Angeles in 1997 and continues to advocate for progressive policies that benefit low-wage workers and low-income communities. Visit LAANE at www.laane.org.