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Service Employees International Union

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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UNION LEADER SAYS GREEN BUILDINGS TRAINING COST-EFFECTIVE WAY TO REDUCE CO2 EMISSIONS

– Campaign Calls to Retrofit 50 Million Buildings –

Washington DC- Speaking at the launch of Rebuilding America, a national campaign calling to retrofit 50 million buildings, 32BJ SEIU President Mike Fishman called on lawmakers to prioritize greening buildings in climate change legislation because they account for 60% of the country's total energy consumption and generate 40% of the greenhouse gas emissions.

“Greening our buildings’ operations and maintenance is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,” said Mike Fishman. “It’s vital that legislation to curb climate change includes resources to train building service workers.”

Fishman emphasized the need for training and apprenticeship programs to ensure that building service workers can run their buildings more efficiently by saving energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. He also stressed the need to create pathways out of low-wage jobs and into the middle class.

“With 40% of greenhouse gas emissions generated by buildings, it is incumbent on the real estate industry and building workers to take concerted action to protect the environment. Greening our cities starts with the workers who operate and maintain our buildings,” said Fishman.

32BJ’s Thomas Shortman Training Fund with help from New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg and top industry CEOs has recently launched “One Year, One Thousand Supers,” an innovative green building initiative to train superintendents and resident managers to become energy efficient building operators. Building workers learn how to reduce water usage, improve heating and air conditioning performance and reduce overall energy use within common areas of the building.

Rebuilding America is a campaign launched by labor, business, consumers’ advocates and environmental organizations calling on our nation’s leaders to transform the market and stand up a retrofit industry that can renovate 50 million residential and commercial buildings by 2020 – 40% of the nation’s building stock.

With more than 110,000 members in eight states and the District of Columbia, 32BJ is the largest property services union in the country.

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