

**Statement of Bruce Roy, Secretary-Treasurer of the Maine AFL-CIO and
President of the Maine Labor Council of the United Steelworkers
Green Jobs Press Conference, Tuesday, September 9, 2008**

It has become abundantly clear that the price of oil is taking too big a bite out of working families' paychecks and eliminating too many jobs. We feel it here in Maine with the closure of the Katahdin mill in Millinocket and the reduction of 150 jobs held by men and women that I work with at Wausau Paper in Jay. We have workers who've been laid off from these and other manufacturing plants still looking for work that will use their skills. We have construction workers who've been out of work because of the housing market collapse and the decrease in business construction work. We have hundreds of lower-wage workers waiting for an opportunity to get some training and move into livable wage jobs. And we have thousands of families worried about how they will stay warm this winter and all the winters to come.

This move to clean energy and green jobs is a way forward for all of us. Creating 9,000 new green jobs in Maine would help revitalize our communities and bring down the cost of oil for our businesses and families. And this isn't just about creating new and different jobs. It's also about retooling and investing in jobs we already have. Putting up a wind farm creates jobs for machinists, truck drivers, electricians, and laborers. Making buildings more energy efficient requires roofers and insulators. These are skills that many Maine workers already have and skills that others can be trained to do.

The federal government has a key role to play in moving the country in the right direction through this short-term investment in our future. Environmental and labor groups are working together both nationally and at the state level to bolster the green economy. Nationally, the United Steelworkers has teamed up with environmental groups to form the Blue Green Alliance and is working on a Green Jobs for American campaign.

Here in Maine, both the United Steelworkers and the Maine AFL-CIO stand ready to work with the Natural Resources Council of Maine and a growing number of green sector businesses to make this new clean energy vision for Maine and America a reality.