



CITY OF
PORTLAND, OREGON

MEASURE: HB 2154A
EXHIBIT: F
Joint Committee on Tax Credits 76th Session

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SUBMITTED BY: Portland City Commissioners

Sam Adams, Mayor MAYOR
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner SAMADAMS
Nick Fish, Commissioner
Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
Randy Leonard, Commissioner

April 18, 2011

Senator Ginny Burdick, Co-Chair
Representative Jules Bailey, Co-Chair
Representative Vicki Berger, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Tax Credits
900 Court Street NE, Room 143
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 2154A

Dear Co-Chair Burdick, Co-Chair Bailey, Co-Chair Berger and Members of the Committee:

The Portland City Council would like to express our support for HB 2154A, which will update the definition of who is eligible for much-needed farmworker housing. By making these necessary definition changes, it will ensure that all farm workers, including those who are now elderly or disabled, can benefit from housing financed with the tax credits, and makes other technical changes to ensure that the Oregon Housing and Community Services agency (OHCS) effectively administers this program.

The City of Portland recognizes that the health and economic vitality of urban and rural communities in Oregon are intertwined. Since 2007, the City of Portland has included a Rural Partnership Section in its State Legislative Agenda. Our objective is to provide support for issues of importance to our rural partners that will enhance the health, safety, and vitality of the entire State. We believe that it is in the best interest of Portland and the State to change the existing farmworker housing definition.

On the most fundamental level, every Portland resident depends on and is nourished by food grown in Oregon's rural communities that is harvested by hard-working farmworkers. The current definition of who is eligible for farmworker housing hasn't kept up with the changes in our economy and farming operations. HB 2154A will provide necessary revisions to the current definition that recognizes the changes in the farmworker industry in terms of how crops are now processed and handled, acknowledges that the farmworker workforce is becoming less migratory requiring the need for more permanent farmworker housing, supports the needs of farmworker housing for the growing aquaculture industry and will permit the farmworker housing tax credit program to address the need for more access to farmworker housing by supporting the purchase of manufactured dwelling parks that will provide another option for farmworker housing.

We urge your support for HB 2154A to ensure that the State's farmworker families have access to an adequate supply of affordable housing by updating eligibility standards to keep up with the changes in the farming industry. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Sam Adams
Mayor

Amanda Fritz
Commissioner

Nick Fish
Commissioner

Dan Saltzman
Commissioner

Randy Leonard
Commissioner