



## Professional Administrative Services, Inc.

*Public Affairs Management Specialists*

Statement in Support of HB 2980

John McCulley

Representing Tree Fruit Growers

March 8, 2013

The tree fruit producers and shippers in the Mid-Columbia region and Umatilla County strongly support HB 2980. This part of Oregon is a national leader in the production of pears and sweet cherries and grows a significant amount of apples.

These are all crops that require harvest by hand during a very short time period. Our family farmers rely on a highly skilled, seasonal and often migrant workforce who often struggle to find decent, affordable housing for a limited time. The on-farm housing provided by growers is a relatively small, but still important, piece of the benefit provided by this tax credit.

Farmers need to attract workers to Oregon so that we can remain competitive in the world marketplace. The family-owned farms I represent operate on very slim margins and face significant risks. As they seek ways to remain competitive, this modest tax incentive from the state makes it possible for producers to invest in the long-term stability of their workforce.

Having a healthy, well-housed, stable workforce benefits the economy and it improves the lives of the workers who harvest our crops.

We urge support extension of this tax credit to keep this important tool that benefits Oregon's farmers, rural communities and families.