



March 10, 2023

*Sheila Stiley, Board
chair – NW Coastal
Housing*

*Kymerly Horner,
Vice-chair - Portland
Community
Reinvestment Inc.*

*Rachael Duke,
Secretary -
Community Partners
for Affordable
Housing*

*Kristy Rodriguez,
Treasurer - Housing
Authority of Malheur
& Harney Counties*

*Trell Anderson –
Northwest Housing
Alternatives*

*David Brandt -
Housing Works*

*Wakan Alferes -
Homes for Good*

*Rita Grady – Polk
CDC*

*Maria Elena Guerra -
Farmworker Housing
Development Corp*

*Nkenge Harmon
Johnson – Urban
League of Portland*

*Brad Ketch –
Rockwood CDC &
Community Dev.
Corp. of Oregon*

*Erica Mills –
NeighborWorks
Umpqua*

*Shannon Vilhauer –
Habitat for Humanity
Oregon*

Senator Mark Meek
Representative Nancy Nathanson
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Tax Expenditure
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for House Bill 2078 – Extend sunset for tax credits for owner and operator of agricultural workforce housing

Dear Co-Chairs Meek, Nathanson and Members of the Committee:

Housing Oregon calls on you to support House Bill 2078, which extends tax credits for the development of affordable housing dedicated to farmworker individuals and their families.

Farmworkers have traditionally lived in overcrowded and substandard housing, and though many housing units have been built using the AWHTC, it is only a small portion of what is needed. By obtaining decent safe and affordable housing, these families are able to participate in their communities in ways they previously only observed.

Since its creation in 1996, these tax credits have been used by community-based organizations (80%) and on-farm housing (20%). Community-based organizations have built 79 affordable housing projects, using an average of \$1,000,000 in Tax Credits. These dedicated housing projects provide also wrap around services, most needed for a community that was largely affected by COVID.

The AWHTC is a good tool for developing housing for farm laborers. The specific funding helps insure that housing for farmworkers is built. Without it, the overwhelming demand for general affordable housing could easily overshadow this specific population needs.

And though it might be easier to just turn this credit into a grant through the General Fund, there is more security in the tax credits. The credits have a six-year sunset rather than a two-year renewal that the General Fund requires. Thus, it ensures developers can build this much

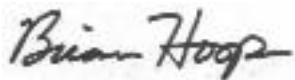
P.O. Box 8427, Portland, OR 97207

needed housing for a period of time. The community-based credits are always fully subscribed and the housing that is created from these credits are much healthier and safer spaces for agricultural workers and their families to live.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of over 80 affordable housing community development corporations (CDCs) and ally organizations committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner. HB 2078 will ensure our member organizations, including Farmworker Housing Development Corporation and Casa of Oregon, can continue to provide a home for farmworkers and their families.

Thank you very much for your consideration of our comments. You can reach me at 503-475-6056 or brian@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Hoop". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon