



March 10, 2023

Sheila Stiley, Board chair – NW Coastal Housing

Kymberly 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.

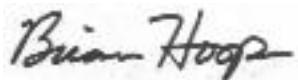
And though it might be easier to just turn this credit into a grant through the General Fund, there is more security in the tax credits. The credits have a six-year sunset rather than a two-year renewal that the General Fund requires. Thus, it ensures developers can build this much

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 fluid and cursive, with "Brian" on top and "Hoop" below it, slightly overlapping.

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon