



Testimony in Support of House Bill 2096
House Committee on Housing
January 26, 2021

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Campos and Morgan and Members of the Committee:

CASA Oregon asks the House Committee on Housing to recommend to the Joint Tax Expenditures Committee an increase in the Agricultural Worker Housing Tax Credit to \$24 million as proposed in HB 2096.

CASA of Oregon's mission is deeply rooted in service to farmworkers and other low-income populations throughout Oregon. We seek to improve the lives of Oregonians by building affordable housing, neighborhood facilities and programs that increase families' financial well-being. We are a nonprofit community development organization that works to support thriving communities by working with local nonprofits, housing authorities and local government.

For more than 30 years, CASA has been developing and rehabilitating housing in the community. CASA has helped farmers repair their on-farm housing. Our focus has always been on improving the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Ensuring the health and welfare of those harvesting our crops has been of paramount concern to CASA and our partner organizations.

While CASA of Oregon wholly supports the increase of the tax credit to \$24 million, we are unable to support the language that monetizes the credit allowing Oregon Housing and Community Services to act as a contributor so that they may pass through grants to farmers. We encourage OHCS to engage stakeholders around this concept to ensure that it is piloted in an equitable fashion.

Thanks for the opportunity to show our support for increased resources for Oregon's essential agricultural workers.