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Farmworker Housing Development Corporation

Corporacion de Desarrollo de Vivienda Campesina

www.FHDC.org

FHDC Testimony supporting HB 4038
House Energy, Environment and Water Committee
February 2, 2012

Submitted by FHDC Executive Director Roberto Jimenez

The Farmworker Housing Development Corporation strongly supports passage of HB 4038 and the continuation of Farmworker Housing Tax Credit program.

The Farm Worker Tax Credit has been utilized by FHDC to build 188 units of community-based affordable housing with another 40 set to be constructed this year. The result of this is that approximately 1000 individuals are living in stable, healthy housing environments. Approximately 90% of these working families qualified as homeless prior to living in FHDC housing.

Stable farmworker families means a stable labor pool for Oregon's nearly \$5billion agriculture industry that creates jobs for Oregon's estimated 150,000 farmworkers and their families. The demand for farmworker housing is acute. Oregon is meeting less than 2% of that demand.

Nuevo Amanecer Phases I & II are farmworker projects in Woodburn that have benefited from the FWHTC program. Yet, for ninety units of housing there are currently over 300 families on the waiting list. Nuevo Amanecer Phase IV will add an additional 40 units this year thanks to the FWHTC program.

The FWHTC program leverages millions of dollars in federal funds for affordable farmworker housing. The FWHTC source is usually the first source of funding allocated to a farmworker housing project and makes these projects competitive for federal funding. Without this source even fewer farmworker projects would be built.

The FWHTC program allows for improved underwriting and lower rent structures that make housing more affordable for farmworkers. Without the FWHTC program housing providers would have far greater difficulty providing housing to working families that make Oregon's agriculture industry possible.

We appreciate this opportunity to share our views and urge a "yes" vote on HB 4038.

Sincerely,

Roberto Jiménez
Executive Director

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