



Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste *Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United*

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PCUN testimony supporting amendment of HB 4038 to include extension of Farmworker Housing Tax Credits

House Energy, Environment and Water Committee
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Submitted by PCUN Secretary-Treasurer Larry Kleinman

PCUN, Oregon's farmworker union, strongly supports amendment of HB 4038 to include continuation of Farmworker Housing Tax Credits in Oregon.

Since our founding in 1985, PCUN has advocated for and worked to increase the supply of decent and affordable housing for farmworkers. The shortage of such housing existed in 1985 and continues to exist today.

Part of our longstanding efforts to remedy this shortage has manifest in our co-founding of the Farmworker Housing Development Corporation (FHDC) in 1991 and our active support for and participation in its efforts. I serve as FHDC's board treasurer.

The Farmworker Housing Tax Credits (FHTC) have played an indispensable role in the development and rehabilitation of FHDC's 188 apartment units located in Woodburn, Salem and Independence. A total of more than 1,000 individuals currently reside in these units. Since FHDC opened its first project, *Nuevo Amanecer*, in Woodburn in 1994, many hundreds of families have moved into FHDC apartment units, stabilized their families, gained training and skills, and moved onto to market rate housing or home ownership. There are thousands more who desperately need such housing and opportunity.

By enacting HB 4038 and extending the Credits' sunset, the Oregon Legislature will be sending a strong message to investors, to growers, and to farmworkers that the economic security of Oregon agribusiness and continues to be a high priority, as is the condition of farmworker families, and that housing plays a key role in both. By extending the sunset now, in the 2012 session, rather than leaving that decision to the 2013 session, the Oregon Legislature will provide greater certainty for organizations like FHDC, for growers and for investors. In today's economic and financial climate, that's an essential element.

As a long-time leader of PCUN, I can attest that our organization and grower associations have often disagreed on public policy, sometimes sharply. Therefore, it's significant to note that, on Farmworker Housing Tax Credits extension, **the union and the employers are united.**

We appreciate the Committee's consideration of our views. I can be contacted at larrykleinman@pcun.org

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