

OREGON FARM WORKER HOUSING COALITION

"Housing Oregon's Farmworkers"



A Collaborative Effort of Oregon Opportunity Network
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Testimony of Peter Hainley on Amendment to HB 4038 House Energy, Environment and Water Committee Thursday, February 2, 2012

For 22 years, the **Farm Worker Housing Tax Credit** has been leveraging scarce federal and private funds. The economic impact of the construction of the housing and the ongoing operation are significant in the rural communities where the housing has been constructed. It is an efficient way to raise funds and the finished product is an incredible resource to ensure a stable workforce in the rural areas.

The credit has helped alleviate some of the abysmal living situations for agricultural laborers in our fine state. While 1,500 new community-based units have been created and many on-farm units have been rehabilitated or newly constructed, it is estimated that only 3% of the state's agricultural workers are housed in safe, decent and affordable housing.

The **Oregon Farm Worker Housing Coalition** was formed after the tax credit was not extended during the 2011 legislative session. Despite multiple hearings in the House Agricultural and the Joint Tax Credit Committees, there was insufficient time to get the bill passed. Upon the suggestion of Senator Burdick, interested parties got together to discuss the issues that arose from the 2011 hearings. Oregon Opportunity Network, representing housing, economic development and social service organizations throughout the state, convened a number of meetings and helped form the coalition. Members of this coalition, including representatives from the **Oregon Farm Bureau**, **Oregon Association of Nurseries** and **Oregon Tree Fruit Growers** met over a period of seven months with the **Departments of Agriculture, Revenue, Housing and Community Services** and **OR-OSHA** to discuss ways to make the credit more efficient and accountable. The agencies have determined the actions that they will take and are on the verge of signing a memorandum of understanding which memorializes these actions.

We urge the committee to **extend the farmworker housing tax credit to 2020**. This housing is vital to the health and well-being of our rural, agricultural communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Statewide Organizations:

CASA of Oregon
CAUSA
Catholic Charities
Community Development Law Center
Ecumenical Ministries Oregon
Housing Alliance
Latino Network
LMC Construction
Neel Management Team
NORPAC Foods
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Farm Bureau
Oregon State Board of Agriculture
Oregon Winegrowers Association
Piñeros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Rose Community Development
Scott Edwards Architecture LLP

Columbia Gorge:

Columbia Cascade Housing Corp.
Columbia Gorge Fruit Growers
Orchard View Farms

Central & Eastern Oregon

Boardman Foods
CASA
CASA Specialties, Inc. Joel Chavez
Lawson
Housing Authority of Malheur County
Housing Works
RDO - Calbee Foods, LLC
Umatilla County Housing Authority
Threemile Canyon Farms, LLC

Southern Oregon:

Bear Creek Orchards, Inc.
Housing Authority of Jackson County
Klamath Housing Authority

Willamette Valley:

A to Z Wineworks
Adelante Mujeres
Bienestar
Hacienda CDC
Centro Cultural of Washington County
Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Community Home Builders
Community Action Organization
Farmworker Housing Development Corp.
Housing Authority of Yamhill County
Anne Lininger, Clackamas County Commissioner
North Willamette Valley Habitat for Humanity
Joseph Shelter
St. Vincent De Paul of Lane County
Mary Stern, Yamhill County Commissioner
Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services

MEASURE: HB 4038
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