



Testimony in Support of House Bill 2906A
House Committee on Revenue
March 25, 2021

Chair Nathanson, Vice Chairs Pham and Reschke and Members of the Committee:

My name is Peter Hainley and I am the Executive Director of CASA of Oregon. CASA'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 33 years, CASA has had at its core **service to farmworkers**. Whether it is providing housing in the community or helping farmers fix up their labor camps, 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.

The Agricultural Worker Housing Tax Credit has been crucial to creating new housing opportunities. Since this tax credit was created over 30 years ago, it has leveraged scarce federal and state subsidies. The result is that nearly 10,000 farmworkers and their families now have safe, decent and affordable housing. With more than 170,000 farmworkers and their families in Oregon, we still have a long way to go.

In this moment, this funding resource is particularly important. As Covid has ripped through the farmworker and Latinx community, we all have become acutely aware of the dangers of overcrowded and unsanitary housing. The wildfires only exacerbated the situation by destroying public housing that was available to farmworkers in Talent as well as the private homes of many farmworkers throughout the Rogue Valley.

Thanks for the opportunity to show our support for increased resources for Oregon's agricultural workers. And thank you for your service to the people of Oregon.

CASA urges you to pass HB 2096A.