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Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures Agricultural Coalition Testimony in Support of HB 2096

June 4, 2021

Co-Chair Burdick, Co-Chair Nathanson, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2096. By way of background, our organizations represent agricultural business and families across Oregon, many of whom provide housing to their employees as a voluntary benefit or a part of the federal H-2A program.

Providing safe, reliable, and affordable housing to agricultural employees is of vital importance to many agricultural producers who depend on attracting a highly skilled workforce. Unfortunately, building and maintaining housing is incredibly expensive, and many producers are unable to absorb the costs. To make matters worse, recent regulatory requirements and devastating wildfires have drastically reduced the availability of housing for Oregon's agricultural workers. A robust, healthy, safe, and housed workforce is critical to the success of Oregon agriculture and securing our state's food supply. Now more than ever, we must incentivize and support the creation of housing opportunities for agricultural workers.

For these reasons, we support HB 2096 as it will expand agricultural workforce housing tax credits, so they can be better utilized by housing providers. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of our groups with questions or concerns.

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