

March 10, 2023

Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures, Co-Chair Meek & Co-Chair Nathanson

The Oregon Farm Bureau Federation (OFB) is the state's most comprehensive general agricultural association, representing more than 6,000 farm and ranch families in Oregon who make up a significant part of our rural communities.

Oregon Farm Bureau asks for your support of House Bill 2078

In 1989, the Legislature declared, in part, "...it is the policy of this state to ensure adequate agricultural labor accommodations commensurate with the housing needs of Oregon's workers that meet decent health, safety, and welfare standards."

The Agricultural Workforce Housing Tax Credit (AWHTC) supports the construction, rehabilitation, and acquisition of housing for agricultural workers and their immediate families.

For more than 30 years, the Oregon State Legislature has invested and renewed the AWHTC. This tax credit continues to be a crucial resource for the development of safe and affordable housing for Oregon's agricultural workforce.

The tax credits in HB 2078 are not only a public commitment to provide clean, safe, and affordable housing for Oregon's agricultural workforce, but also a safeguard. The utilization of the credit ensures the housing units are registered and inspected to meet all occupational safety and health laws, rules, regulations, and standards.

Our members want to provide attractive and comfortable housing for their employees and extending this tax credit, is a signal of support for those efforts.

Oregon's farms and ranches have weathered inflation, workforce shortages, and recent legislation mandating additional burden on employers. The passage of HB 2078 and the AWHTC would maintain a proven and effective tool in Oregon's agricultural economic success.

We thank the Oregon State Legislature for the continued support of the Agriculture Workforce Tax Credit and request that it be renewed.