



March 28, 2023

To: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

From: Lisa Rogers, CASA of Oregon

Re: HB 3555 Relating to Agricultural Workforce Housing Development

Chair Dexter, Vice Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and members of the committee,

My name is Lisa Rogers. I am the deputy director of CASA of Oregon. CASA started its work 35 years ago addressing the housing needs of farmworkers/agricultural workforce in Oregon. Working with local communities and organizations, we have developed hundreds of units serving thousands of Oregonians.

This particular bill perfectly marries two housing objectives: to build new affordable housing and to further equity by allowing the housing to be cooperatively owned by the residents.

Along with developing agricultural workforce housing, we also help residents of manufactured home communities/parks convert their parks to resident ownership. Currently we are redeveloping Talent Mobile Estates (TME), an 89-space manufactured home park that was destroyed by the 2020 Almeda fire. Numerous farmworker families occupied this particular community. We have been working with our partner in Southern Oregon, Coalición Fortaleza, to conduct community engagement and to help us recruit future residents (primarily fire survivors) for TME. We have sought their input to see what they want their new community to look like. Eventually, once the park is developed and new homes placed, the residents will take ownership of the homes, form a cooperative, and collectively own and manage the community.

There is a great need for affordable agricultural workforce housing. Even after 35 years of developing this type of housing, we have barely addressed the need.

We strongly support this new funding for the development and rehabilitation of agricultural workforce housing.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to our great state.