



TO: House Committee on Housing and Homelessness

FR: Ira Cuello-Martinez, PCUN

RE: Support for HB 3555

March 28, 2023

Chair Dexter, Vice-Chairs Gamba and Helfrich, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ira Cuello-Martinez and I am the policy and advocacy director at PCUN, Oregon's Farmworker Union. PCUN works to empower farmworkers and working Latinx families and improve their working conditions through community building, organizing, and policy advocacy.

We are in strong support of HB 3555-1 which is a \$20 million investment for community-based farmworker housing.

As you are aware, we are in a severe housing crisis with many farmworkers unable to afford increasing rent prices. Our members are struggling to keep up and many are facing housing instability with the constant risk of eviction. We have heard countless stories about people in informal housing situations and the need to frequently move. This investment in community-based housing will alleviate the stress of many farmworker families. Not only will their housing be affordable but they will also have access to several services such as educational support and workforce development.

In addition, these housing projects must be built within 20 miles of significant agricultural employment. This is a benefit for agricultural employers who will have access to hiring farmworkers on a year-round basis. We believe that the increase in community-based farmworker housing will improve sustainability for Oregon's agricultural industry.

We appreciate the legislature's work to address our housing crisis and we ask that you support farmworkers by investing in community-based housing. We urge you to vote yes on HB 3555-1.

Ira Cuello-Martinez

Policy and Advocacy Director

PCUN