

North Dakota 67th Legislative Assembly
Interim Appropriations Committees

Dear Interim Senate and House appropriations committees,

Please accept this testimony in favor of this one-time funding request of ARPA dollars for the construction of a Fisher House in North Dakota. This is a great public-private partnership which will provide short, and long-term economic stimulus for North Dakota. Using local and national fund-raising efforts as a non-profit entity the Fisher House Foundation will construct a Fisher House on or near the Fargo VA Medical Center which will serve all of North Dakota and parts of Minnesota and South Dakota. Once construction is completed the Fisher House is turned over to the Federal VA who will then be responsible for the maintenance, operations and staffing of the facility. This program will not rely on any future State funds.

Once operational a Fisher House provides services much like a "Ronald McDonald House", but for veterans and their families. This funding request would *only* go toward the construction of the Fisher House in Fargo ND. Attached I have provided more information about the Fisher House program and about the proposed Fisher House for North Dakota.

Thank you for your consideration on this important program.

Lonnie Wangen
Commissioner
ND Department of Veterans Affairs

Fisher House North Dakota

- Fisher House Foundation builds comfort homes where military & veterans families can stay free of charge, while a loved one is in the hospital. There are 88 Fisher Houses currently in operation around USA and US Military bases around the world. None in North Dakota.
- These homes are located at military and VA medical centers around the world.
- Fisher Houses have up to 21 suites, with private bedrooms and baths. Families share a common kitchen, laundry facilities, a warm dining room, and an inviting living room.
- 100% of proceeds will used for the construction of a beautiful comfort home where families of Veterans can stay free of charge while their loved one receives critical medical care at the Fargo VA Medical Center.
 - Funding will **not** go towards;
 - other states
 - admin costs
 - advertising or fundraising efforts
- Federal VA not allowed to participate in fund raising.

- Construction of an estimated \$8 Million house located on or near Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.
 - Construction cost only. Once the house is built it will be donated to the Federal VA. All ongoing costs are covered by the Federal VA.
 - Approximately 16 Suites
 - Could serve up to 23,000 family members per year (4 per suite per night)
 - Serves all of North Dakota and parts of MN and SD
 - Veterans and families drive up to 400 miles or 7 hours one way to utilize the Fargo VAMC
- Will serve ND Veterans and their families for the foreseeable future.

*This is not a ND Department of Veterans Affairs project.

*More information can be found at: www.Fisherhouse.org



Fisher House North Dakota

Impact Support our Veterans Fund
4141 28th Avenue South
Fargo ND 58104



✓ Supporters

○ **U.S. Senators**

- John Hoeven (ND)
- Kevin Cramer (ND)
- Amy Klobuchar (MN)
- Tina Smith (MN)

○ **U.S. Representatives**

- Kelly Armstrong (ND)
- Former Rep. Collin Peterson (MN)

○ **Governors**

- Doug Burgum (ND)
- Tim Walz (MN)

○ **Federal VA**

- Robert Wilkie, Former Secretary VA. Approved Fargo Fisher House
- Dr. Breton M. Weintraub-Director Fargo VAMC
- Dale Dekrey, Associate Director, Fargo VAMC

○ **Veteran Service Organizations**

- Administrative Committee on Veterans Affairs (ND)

- Veterans Legislative Council (ND)
- American Legion (ND & MN)
- AMVETS (ND)
- Disabled Veterans (ND, MN, SD)
- Veterans of Foreign Wars (ND)
- Vietnam Veterans of America (ND)
- ND County and Tribal Veteran Service Officer Association (ND)

○ **State and Political sub-division**

- State Legislators (ND)
- Veterans Affairs (ND, MN, SD)
- Association of Counties (ND)
- Mayors
 - Dr. Tim Mahoney Fargo
 - Bernie Dardis West Fargo
 - Kory Peterson Horace
- Fargo Parks District

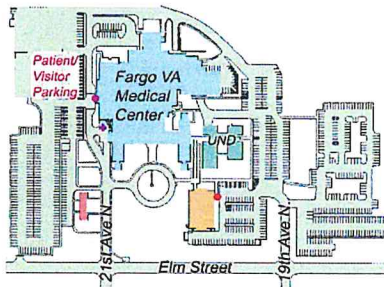
“Because a Families Love is Good Medicine”

<https://app.givingheartsday.org/#/charity/235>

<https://fisherhouse.org/>

Location & Construction:

- Construction goal:
 - Begin 2022-2023
 - Land & construction funds need to be acquired.
- Construction, landscaping, furnishings' and artwork. estimated at \$8 million
- Location will be on or near the Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.



FISHER HOUSE NORTH DAKOTA



Rendering of Fisher House North Dakota.

Fisher House North Dakota

- 13,400+ square foot building.
- Approximately 16-Suites.
- Estimated to serve 23,000 family members per year.
- Serves North Dakota and 18 Counties in Minnesota and South Dakota.

Donor Recognition

- Donor Recognition will be provided on a permanent Brass Plaque located inside the Fisher House.
- Donations are for construction of ND House.
- Federal VA covers ongoing operation expenses after construction.



Donations accepted at Impact Foundation-Support Our Veterans Fund-Fisher House campaign

<https://app.givingheartsday.org/#/charity/235> www.fisherhouse.org

Questions: fisherhousend@gmail.com