

2023 HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

HB 1157

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
2/9/2023

BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher house.

9:26 AM Chairman Vigesaa- Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken:

Members present; Chairman Vigesaa, Representative Kempenich, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Bellew, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Members not Present- Representative B. Anderson

Discussion Topics:

- Added to Veterans Affairs Budget

Representative Strinden- Explains the bills purpose.

Representative Strinden- Move for a Do Not Pass

Representative J. Stemen- Seconds the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	Y
Representative Keith Kempenich	Y
Representative Bert Anderson	A
Representative Larry Bellew	Y
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	Y
Representative Bob Martinson	Y
Representative Lisa Meier	Y
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y

Representative Emily O'Brien	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	Y
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	Y
Representative Greg Stemen	Y
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	Y

Motion Carries 22-0-1 Representative Strinden will carry the bill

Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for HB 1157 9:30 AM

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

Bill will be brought back for reconsideration due to lack of a hearing.

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee
Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
2/15/2023

BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher house.

8:08 AM Chairman Vigesaa- Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken-

Members present; Chairman Vigesaa, Representative Kempenich, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Members not Present- Representative Bellew

Discussion Topics:

- Reconsideration
- Added to Budget of HB 1025

Chairman Vigesaa Brought HB 1157 back for reconsideration because of lack of a hearing.

Representative Martinson- Makes a motion for the reconsideration.

Representative Mock- Seconds the motion.

Voice Vote- Motion Carries

Representative Strinden Introduces the bill

Representative Schauer- Testifies in favor. (Testimony #20851)

Representative Martinson- Move for a Do Not Pass

Representative Strinden- Seconds the Motion

Committee discussion- Roll call vote

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	Y
Representative Keith Kempenich	Y
Representative Bert Anderson	Y
Representative Larry Bellew	A
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	Y
Representative Bob Martinson	Y
Representative Lisa Meier	Y
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y
Representative Emily O'Brien	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	Y
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	Y
Representative Greg Stemen	Y
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	Y

Motion Carries Representative Strinden will carry the bill.

Additional written testimony: Lonnie Wagner, ND Department of Veterans Affairs (#20845, #20641)

8:14 AM Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for HB 1157

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

Bill is brought back to reconsider committee action on Feb. 16th.

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Brynhild Haugland Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
2/16/2023

BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher house.

6:17 PM Chairman Vigesaa- Meeting was called to order and roll call was taken:

Members present; Chairman Vigesaa, Representative B. Anderson, Representative Bellew, Representative Brandenburg, Representative Hanson, Representative Kreidt, Representative Martinson, Representative Mitskog, Representative Meier, Representative Mock, Representative Monson, Representative Nathe, Representative J. Nelson, Representative O'Brien, Representative Pyle, Representative Richter, Representative Sanford, Representative Schatz, Representative Schobinger, Representative Strinden, Representative G. Stemen and Representative Swiontek.

Members not Present- Representative Kempenich

Discussion Topics:

- Reconsideration of Committee Action

Chairman Vigesaa Asks committee to reconsider our actions.

Representative Swiontek - Moves for the committee to reconsider their previous action.

Representative Brandenburg- Seconds the motion.

Voice Vote-Motion Carries

Representative Brandenburg Move for a Do Pass

Representative Meier Seconds the motion.

Committee discussion- Roll call vote

Representatives	Vote
Representative Don Vigesaa	Y
Representative Keith Kempenich	A
Representative Bert Anderson	Y
Representative Larry Bellew	Y
Representative Mike Brandenburg	Y
Representative Karla Rose Hanson	Y
Representative Gary Kreidt	Y
Representative Bob Martinson	Y

Representative Lisa Meier	Y
Representative Alisa Mitskog	Y
Representative Corey Mock	Y
Representative David Monson	Y
Representative Mike Nathe	Y
Representative Jon O. Nelson	Y
Representative Emily O'Brien	Y
Representative Brandy Pyle	Y
Representative David Richter	Y
Representative Mark Sanford	Y
Representative Mike Schatz	Y
Representative Randy A. Schobinger	Y
Representative Greg Stemen	Y
Representative Michelle Strinden	Y
Representative Steve Swiontek	Y

Motion Carries 22-0-1 Representative Strinden will carry the bill.

6:21 PM Chairman Vigesaa Closed the meeting for HB 1157

Risa Berube, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1157: Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (22 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1157 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2023 SENATE AGRICULTURE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1157

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
3/17/2023

A bill for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veteran's affairs for providing grants for construction of the Fisher house.

8:32 AM Chairman Luick called the meeting to order. Members present: Chairman Luick, Vice Chairman Myrdal, Senator Lemm, Senator Hogan, Senator Weston, Senator Weber.

Discussion Topics:

- Fisher house
- Housing help for veterans' family
- Purchase of land
- VA Medical Centers

8:32 AM Representative Austen Schauer introduced HB 1157 and testified in favor. #25688.

8:38 AM Lonnie Wangen, Commissioner, ND Dept. of Veterans Affairs testified in favor of HB 1157. #25234

Additional written testimony:

Joe Hall, President of the ND Veterans Legislative Council, #24269
Michelle Gauvin-Panos, Office of the Adjutant General/ND Cares, #25541
Michelle Strinden, South Fargo's District, #25648

8:49 AM Chairman Luick closed the hearing on HB 1157.

8:49 AM Senator Myrdal moved to DO PASS HB 1157.

8:49 AM Senator Weston seconded the motion to DO PASS HB 1157.

Roll call vote:

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Vote 6-0-0 Motion DO PASS HB 1157.

Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
HB 1157
March 17, 2023
Page 2

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

8:50 AM Chairman Luick closed the meeting.

Committee reconsidered HB 1157 on March 17, 2023 at 9:51 AM.

Brenda Cook, Committee Clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee Fort Union Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
3/17/2023

A bill for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for construction of the Fisher house.

9:51 AM Chairman Luick called the meeting to order. Members present: Chairman Luick, Vice Chairman Myrdal, Senator Lemm, Senator Hogan, Senator Weston, Senator Weber.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

9:51 AM Senator Myrdal withdrew her previous motion to DO PASS HB 1157 that was voted on at 8:49 AM on 3-17-23.

9:51 AM Senator Weston withdrew his previous seconded to DO PASS HB 1157 that was voted on at 8:49 AM on 3-17-23.

Roll call vote:

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Vote: 6-0-0- Motion to withdraw previous vote on HB 1157.

9:52 AM Senator Myrdal moved to DO PASS HB 1157 and Re-refer to Appropriations.

9:52 AM Senator Weston seconded.

Roll call vote:

Senators	Vote
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y
Senator Kathy Hogan	Y
Senator Randy D. Lemm	Y
Senator Mark F. Weber	Y
Senator Kent Weston	Y

Vote: 6-0-0 DO PASS AND RE-REFER TO APPROPRIATIONS.

Senator Weber will carry the bill.

9:53 AM Chairman Luick adjourned the meeting.

Brenda Cook, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1157: Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee (Sen. Luick, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1157 was rereferred to the **Appropriations Committee**. This bill does not affect workforce development.

2023 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

HB 1157

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations - Human Resources Division Roughrider Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
3/29/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher house.

8:05 AM Chairman Dever called the meeting to order. Members present: Senators Dever, Davison, Burckhard, Mathern, Kreun.

Discussion Topics:

- Fisher House
- Foundation history
- Military & family housing & support
- Public private partnership
- VA purchased land
- North Dakota Fundraising
- Geographical proximity
- Federal regulations
- ARPA funds

8:06 AM Austen Schauer, ND Representative, District 13, introduced HB 1157, testified in favor. Testimony #26951

8:17 AM Lonnie Wangen, Commissioner, ND Department of Veterans' Affairs, testified in favor. Testimony #26949

8:25 AM Senator Burckhard moved DO PASS on HB 1157.
Senator Kreun seconded the motion.

8:27 AM Senator Burckhard withdrew his motion.
Senator Kreun withdrew his second.

8:28 AM Senator Burckhard moved to adopt amendment to change funding source.
Senator Davison seconded the motion.

Roll call vote.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y

Motion carried 5-0-0.

8:29 AM Senator Burckhard moved DO PASS AS AMENDED.

Senator Kreun seconded the motion.

Roll call vote.

Senators	Vote
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y

Motion passed 5-0-0.

Senator Dever will carry the bill to the full committee.

8:30 AM Chairman Dever closed the meeting.

Susan Huntington, Committee clerk

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Appropriations Committee Roughrider Room, State Capitol

HB 1157
3/31/2023

A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of veterans' affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher house.

10:52 AM Chairman Bekkedahl opened the meeting on HB 1157.

Members present: Senators Bekkedahl, Krebsbach, Burckhard, Davison, Dever, Dwyer, Erbele, Kreun, Mathern, Meyer, Roers, Schaible, Sorvaag, Vedaa, Wanzek, and Rust.

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

10:53 AM Senator Dever introduced the bill.

10:55 AM Senator Dwyer moved to adopt amendment. LC 23.0556.01001 #27164

10:55 AM Senator Davison seconded.

Roll call vote.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Jim P. Roers	Y
Senator David S. Rust	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Shawn Vedaa	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion passed. 16-0-0

10:59 AM Senator Dwyer moved DO PASS as amended.

10:59 AM Senator Wanzek seconded.

Roll call vote.

Senators	Vote
Senator Brad Bekkedahl	Y
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	Y
Senator Randy A. Burckhard	Y
Senator Kyle Davison	Y
Senator Dick Dever	Y
Senator Michael Dwyer	Y
Senator Robert Erbele	Y
Senator Curt Kreun	Y
Senator Tim Mathern	Y
Senator Scott Meyer	Y
Senator Jim P. Roers	Y
Senator David S. Rust	Y
Senator Donald Schaible	Y
Senator Ronald Sorvaag	Y
Senator Shawn Vedaa	Y
Senator Terry M. Wanzek	Y

Motion passed. 16-0-0

Senator Dever will carry the bill.

10:59 AM Chairman Bekkedahl closed the meeting.

Justin Boone on behalf of Kathleen Hall, Committee Clerk

NG
3/31/23
1/1

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1157

Page 1, line 5, remove "in the general fund in"

Page 1, line 6, replace "the state treasury" with "from federal funds derived from the state fiscal recovery fund"

Re-number accordingly

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT:

House Bill No. 1157 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Senate Action

	Base Budget	House Version	Senate Changes	Senate Version
Fisher house		\$500,000		\$500,000
Total all funds	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
Less estimated income	0	0	500,000	500,000
General fund	\$0	\$500,000	(\$500,000)	\$0
FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Department 321 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Detail of Senate Changes

	Adjusts Funding for the Fisher House ¹	Total Senate Changes
Fisher house		
Total all funds	\$0	\$0
Less estimated income	500,000	500,000
General fund	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)
FTE	0.00	0.00

¹ One-time funding of \$500,000 for a grant to assist in the construction of the Fisher House at the Fargo Veterans' Affairs Medical Center is adjusted by removing funding from the general fund and adding funding from the federal State Fiscal Recovery Fund.

NG
3/31/23

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1157: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Bekkedahl, Chairman) recommends **AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (16 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1157 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

Page 1, line 5, remove "in the general fund in"

Page 1, line 6, replace "the state treasury" with "from federal funds derived from the state fiscal recovery fund"

Renumber accordingly

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT:

House Bill No. 1157 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Senate Action

	Base Budget	House Version	Senate Changes	Senate Version
Fisher house		\$500,000		\$500,000
Total all funds	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
Less estimated income	0	0	500,000	500,000
General fund	\$0	\$500,000	(\$500,000)	\$0
FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Department 321 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Detail of Senate Changes

	Adjusts Funding for the Fisher House ¹	Total Senate Changes
Fisher house		
Total all funds	\$0	\$0
Less estimated income	500,000	500,000
General fund	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)
FTE	0.00	0.00

¹ One-time funding of \$500,000 for a grant to assist in the construction of the Fisher House at the Fargo Veterans' Affairs Medical Center is adjusted by removing funding from the general fund and adding funding from the federal State Fiscal Recovery Fund.

TESTIMONY

HB 1157

HB 1157

North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
Lonnie Wangen-Commissioner

2/15/2023

**House Appropriations Committee
68th Legislative Session
Representative Vigesaa -Chair**

Chairman Vigesaa and House Appropriations Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1157.

Intent of this bill:

- Provide \$500,000 one-time funding for construction of a Fisher House in North Dakota.
 - Veteran and Family lodging while undergoing medical treatment
 - Similar to “Ronald McDonald House”

Need for bill:

- Fargo VA Medical Center (VAMC) has the largest geographical area of any VAMC in the VA
- ND Veterans and families drive up to 400 miles or 7 hours one way to utilize the Fargo VAMC
- Up to \$9 Million cost for Construction and furnishing.
 - Federal VA cannot fund raise or add funds to the construction of house (by law). Fundraising is through the non-profit Fisher House Organization.
 - Fund raising pays for Construction and furnishing only.
 - Once the house is built it will be transferred to the Federal VA.
 - All ongoing costs are covered by the Federal VA.
 - State of ND will not have ownership or fiscal responsibility in the future.

Outcome of bill:

- Construction of an estimated \$9 Million house located on or near Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.
 - Approximately 16 Suites
 - Veterans and Families can stay at no cost while veteran undergoes treatment at VA or Contracted medical facility.
- Could serve up to 23,000 family members per year (4 per suite per night)
- Serve all of North Dakota, 17 counties of MN, 1 county of SD

This incredible Public-Private partnership includes Federal VA, State of ND, State of MN, Non-profit Fisher House Organization, Non-profit Dakota Medical Foundation and many private donors. Please support this important project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

Fisher House Foundation builds comfort homes where military & veterans' families can stay free of charge, while a loved one is in the hospital.

- 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.
- Since inception, the program has saved military and veterans' families an estimated \$451 million in out-of-pocket costs for lodging and transportation.
- Source: <https://www.fisherhouse.org/about/>
- **Mission**
 - Funding construction of a Fisher House at the Fargo VA Medical Center where the families of patients can stay while their loved ones receive critical medical care.
- **About**
 - The Impact Foundation is raising funds to help Fisher House Foundation construct the first Fisher House in North Dakota. 100% of proceeds will go to help build 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.

Over 90 Fisher Houses in operation.

- Houses in our neighboring states
 - Minnesota- Minneapolis
 - Michigan-Ann Arbor
 - Nebraska-Omaha
 - Wisconsin-Milwaukee
 - Illinois-Chicago

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

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

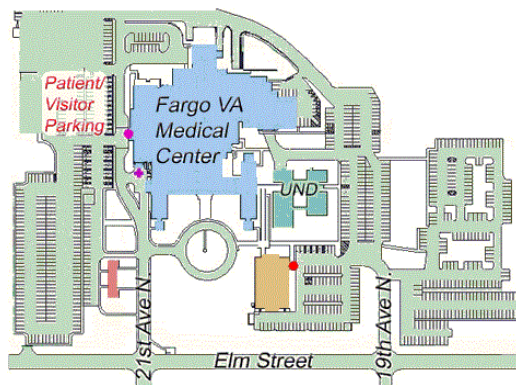
Federal VA biennium expenditures in North Dakota has surpassed **\$1 Billion**



Unofficial rendering of Fisher House ND-reflects local architecture

Location & Construction:

- Construction goal:
 - Begin 2022-2023
 - Land & construction funds need to be acquired.
- Construction, landscaping, furnishings, and artwork. estimated up to \$9 million
- Location will be on or near the Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.



FISHER HOUSE NORTH DAKOTA



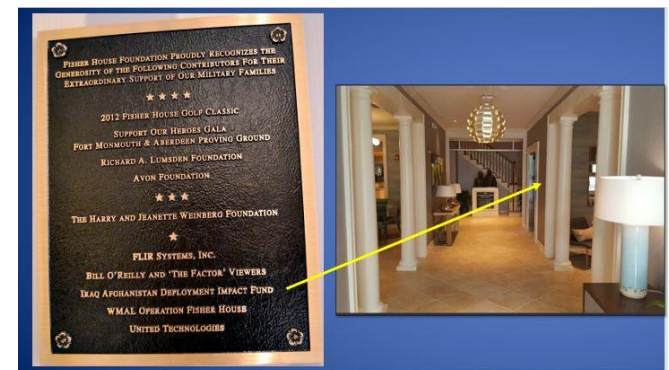
Rendering of Fisher House North Dakota.

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



FISHER HOUSE FACTS



Fisher Houses:

- Are between 5,000 and 16,800 square feet
- Provide 7 to 21 suites
- Are professionally furnished and decorated
- Accommodate 16 to 42 family members
- Feature common kitchens, dining and living room
- Are gifted to DoD and VA upon completion



1,200

Daily lodging capacity



9.5 million

Number of lodging days offered

Since Inception (1990)



\$500 million

Savings to families in lodging and transportation



400,000

Families served

For 30 years, the Fisher House program has provided “a home away from home” for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. These homes offer free, temporary lodging to military and veterans’ families, allowing them to be close to their loved one during a medical crisis and focus on what’s important—the healing process. There are 86 Fisher Houses* located in the US, Germany and United Kingdom.

*As of April 2020



Fisher House Foundation has several other major programs:

Hero Programs—Allows donated frequent flyer miles and hotel points to be used to bring family members to the bedside of injured or ill service members.

Newman’s Own Award—A grant program that supports other military charities.

Scholarships—A grant program that provides scholarships to children and spouses of military families.



www.fisherhouse.org

Ratings matter.



We’ve earned four stars (out of four) from Charity Navigator

A+

Our grade from CharityWatch



Fisher House Foundation
12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Ste. 410
Rockville, MD 20852
888-294-8560
info@fisherhouse.org

Interstate closed this morning. Hope I can get in remotely.

HB 1157 is important to me and I planned to be there this morning.

Thank you

Lonnie Wangen

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the House Appropriations Committee.

My name is Austen Schauer, representing District 13, West Fargo.

It is with great privilege that I ask for your support of the **ND Fisher House** (in the form of **HB 1157**) to be located near the VA Medical Center in Fargo.

The **Fisher House** was founded more than 30 years ago by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher who were in the construction business.

They were at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. and noticed families of veterans sleeping overnight on couches, chairs and in their vehicles while their loved ones were being treated for serious medical injuries.

This was **unacceptable** for the Fishers. This would be unacceptable to North Dakota.

Since that time, 88 **Fisher Houses** have been built in the United States and U.S. military bases around the world but **not** here in our state.

The VA Medical Center in Fargo has the **largest footprint** in the country serving North Dakota, 18 counties in Minnesota and one county in South Dakota.

Some veterans and their families travel more than **300 miles** to the Fargo VA.

The VA provides **medical help**. The **Fisher House** provides **housing help**.

The **Fisher House** serves **military families** who have sacrificed for their country by staying home **without** a spouse for long periods of time.

This is ***their*** contribution to our country's freedom and liberties.

The **Fisher House** is like a **Ronald McDonald House** for military families.

The families receive free lodging while their loved ones undergo treatment or surgery for ***serious illnesses***.

In addition, the **Fisher House** provides a place of **support** and **comfort** as military families can share stories with other families going through similar difficult times.

The **Fisher House** is an **\$8 to \$9 million dollar** project with more than **\$7 million** raised privately and **\$500 thousand** from the federal government. (ARPA).

All the money raised goes to the building of the House.

Once construction has ended, the **Fisher House** is owned and funded by the federal government through the Veterans Administration.

The size of the **Fisher House** will be around **15 thousand square feet**.

There will be **15 to 16 family suites** with a full kitchen, and a large gathering room for families to visit.

To be sure, it is older veterans in need of critical care at the VA.

However, the VA is also seeing more and more younger veterans; those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan.

They too need help, and their families also need a home away from home.

The ask from us to you is **\$500 thousand dollars** which will put us in position to begin construction within the next 18 months.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and committee members.

I am open for questions.

HB 1157

My name is Joe Hall, I am President of the North Dakota Veterans Legislative Council (NDVLC).

The NDVLC supports this bill and requests a DO PASS for HB 1157.

Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
68th Legislative Session
Senator Luick -Chair

Chairman Luick and Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1157.

Intent of this bill:

- Provide \$500,000 one-time funding for construction of a Fisher House in North Dakota.
 - Veteran and Family lodging while undergoing medical treatment
 - Similar to “Ronald McDonald House”

Need for bill:

- Fargo VA Medical Center (VAMC) has the largest geographical area of any VAMC in the VA
- ND Veterans and families drive up to 400 miles or 7 hours one way to utilize the Fargo VAMC
- Fargo VAMC medical ND Veteran appointments
 - 2021: 295,413 19,858 unique veterans
 - 2022: 279,065 20,113 unique veterans
- Up to \$9 Million cost for Construction and furnishing.
 - Federal VA cannot fund raise or add funds to the construction of house (by law). Fundraising is through the non-profit Fisher House Organization.
 - Fund raising pays for Construction and furnishing only.
 - Once the house is built it will be transferred to the Federal VA.
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 - State of ND will not have ownership or fiscal responsibility in the future.

Outcome of bill:

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 - Approximately 16 Suites
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- Could serve up to 23,000 family members per year (4 per suite per night)
- Serve all of North Dakota, 17 counties of MN, 1 county of SD

This incredible Public-Private partnership includes Federal VA, State of ND, State of MN, Non-profit Fisher House Organization, Non-profit Dakota Medical Foundation and many private donors. Please support this important project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee
68th Legislative Session
Senator Luick -Chair

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Outcome of bill:

- Construction of an estimated \$9 Million house located on or near Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.
 - Approximately 16 Suites
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- Could serve up to 23,000 family members per year (4 per suite per night)
- Serve all of North Dakota, 17 counties of MN, 1 county of SD

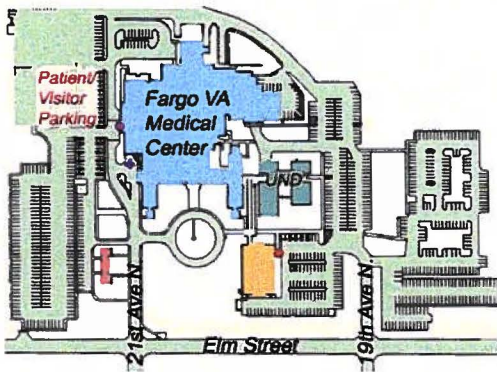
This incredible Public-Private partnership includes Federal VA, State of ND, State of MN, Non-profit Fisher House Organization, Non-profit Dakota Medical Foundation and many private donors. Please support this important project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

Location & Construction:

- Construction goal:
 - Begin 2023-2024
 - Land & construction funds need to be acquired.
- Construction, landscaping, furnishings, and artwork. estimated up to \$9 million
- Location will be on or near the Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.



FISHER HOUSE NORTH DAKOTA



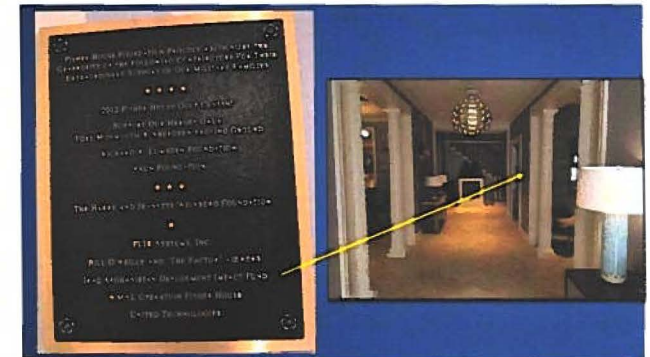
Rendering of Fisher House North Dakota.

Fisher House North Dakota

- 13,400+ square foot building.
- Approximately 16-Suites.
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- 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



FISHER HOUSE FACTS



Fisher Houses:

- Are between 5,000 and 16,800 square feet
- Provide 7 to 21 suites
- Are professionally furnished and decorated
- Accommodate 16 to 42 family members
- Feature common kitchens, dining and living room
- Are gifted to DoD and VA upon completion



1,200
Daily lodging capacity



9.5 million
Number of lodging days offered

Since Inception (1990)



\$500 million
Savings to families in lodging and transportation



400,000
Families served

For 30 years, the Fisher House program has provided “a home away from home” for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. These homes offer free, temporary lodging to military and veterans’ families, allowing them to be close to their loved one during a medical crisis and focus on what’s important—the healing process. There are 86 Fisher Houses* located in the US, Germany and United Kingdom.

*As of April 2020



Fisher House Foundation has several other major programs:

Hero Programs—Allows donated frequent flyer miles and hotel points to be used to bring family members to the bedside of injured or ill service members.

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www.fisherhouse.org

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We’ve earned four stars (out of four) from Charity Navigator

A+

Our grade from CharityWatch



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12300 Twinbrook Parkway, Ste. 410
Rockville, MD 20852
888-294-8560
info@fisherhouse.org



"Supporting those who served."

16 March 2023

Chairman Luick and Senate Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee,

I am Michelle Gauvin-Panos, Executive Director of ND Cares and I submit this testimony in support of House Bill 1157, to provide an appropriation to the department of veteran's affairs for providing grants for the construction of the Fisher House.

The purpose of ND Cares is to resolve barriers or gaps in services to ensure those serving and those who have served, their families, and survivors receive the care and assistance they need. One of the gaps identified by the ND Cares Coalition is the need for a place where families, can be close to their veteran while they receive critical care at the Fargo VA Medical Center.

A Fisher House will allow families, who live far from the VA, to continue offering the support and love their veteran needs without the stress of paying for nearby lodging and driving long distances. Family support is extremely important to veterans undergoing treatment and the Fisher House will offer the support the "families" need.

ND Cares urges the committee to pass HB1157.

Respectfully,

Michelle Gauvin-Panos
Executive Director
ND Cares
Office of the Adjutant General
North Dakota National Guard

HB 1157 Fisher House**Representative Michelle Strinden****Friday, March 17th 2023****Good morning Chair Luick and Senate Agriculture and Veteran Affairs Committee,**

My name is Michelle Strinden, and I represent the people of South Fargo's District 41. I have the pleasure to present to you HB 1157 on behalf of all North Dakota veterans and their families.

House Bill 1157 would provide a 500,000 dollar general fund appropriation to the construction of the Fisher House. It was given a unanimous DP recommendation by your House Appropriations committee with a vote of 22-0 and also resoundingly passed the House Chamber.

The Fisher House is like a Ronald McDonald House for families of veterans who are undergoing serious medical treatment at the VA Hospital in Fargo. The first Fisher House was built 30 years ago when John and Elizabeth Fisher were at Walter Reed Hospital and noticed members of veterans sleeping on couches and in their cars and trucks. This was unacceptable for the Fisher family. Since that time, more than 80 Fisher Houses have been built in the U.S. and military posts around the world. But not in North Dakota. The need is great.

The Fargo VA hospital has the biggest footprint in the nation and serves veterans in all of ND, 18 counties in Western Minnesota and one county in South Dakota. Many veterans travel up to 300 miles away to receive care in Fargo, but where do their families stay

during medical emergencies? The cost of a hotel during a 7 to 10 day stay is very expensive.

More than 7 million dollars in private donations has already been raised for construction of the project. Last special session, our legislature approved \$500,000 of federal ARPA dollars for construction costs and with your approval, the state of ND will match that federal contribution. This is a one time expenditure and ownership and all ongoing maintenance and expenses will be covered by the federal government after its completion. Groundbreaking is expected near the VA campus in the spring of 2024.

We love our veterans and also the families of veterans who have made great sacrifices and are rarely acknowledged for it. The families will be able to stay at a home away from home during their loved ones medical crisis.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 1157 Chair Luick and Committee members.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Agriculture and Veterans Affairs Committee.

My name is Austen Schauer, representing District 13, West Fargo.

It is with great privilege that I ask for your support of the **ND Fisher House** (in the form of **HB 1157**) to be located near the VA Medical Center in Fargo.

The **Fisher House** was founded more than 30 years ago by Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher who were in the construction business.

They were at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. and noticed families of veterans sleeping overnight on couches, chairs and in their vehicles while their loved ones were being treated for serious medical injuries.

This was **unacceptable** for the Fishers. This would be unacceptable to North Dakota.

Since that time, 88 **Fisher Houses** have been built in the United States and U.S. military bases around the world but **not** here in our state.

The VA Medical Center in Fargo has the **largest footprint** in the country serving North Dakota, 18 counties in Minnesota and one county in South Dakota.

Some veterans and their families travel more than **300 miles** to the Fargo VA.

The VA provides **medical help**. The **Fisher House** provides **housing help**.

To be sure, it is older veterans in need of critical care at the VA.

However, the VA is also seeing more younger veterans; those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan.

They too need help, and their families also need a home away from home during a difficult time.

Mr. Chairman, and committee members, I ask for your support of **HB 1157** which would provide a one-time funding gift of \$500 thousand dollars to the **Fisher House**.

I am open for questions.

HB 1157

North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
Lonnie Wangen-Commissioner

3/29/2023

Senate Appropriations (HR) Committee
68th Legislative Session
Senator Dever -Chair

Chairman Dever and Senate Appropriations HR Committee,

Please accept this testimony in support of HB 1157.

Intent of this bill:

- Provide \$500,000 one-time funding for construction of a Fisher House in North Dakota.
 - Veteran and Family lodging while undergoing medical treatment
 - Similar to “Ronald McDonald House”

Need for bill:

- Fargo VA Medical Center (VAMC) has the largest geographical area of any VAMC in the VA
- ND Veterans and families drive up to 400 miles or 7 hours one way to utilize the Fargo VAMC
- Fargo VAMC medical ND Veteran appointments
 - 2021: 295,413 19,858 unique veterans
 - 2022: 279,065 20,113 unique veterans
- Up to \$9 Million cost for Construction and furnishing.
 - Federal VA cannot fund raise or add funds to the construction of house (by law). Fundraising is through the non-profit Fisher House Organization.
 - Fund raising pays for Construction and furnishing only.
 - Once the house is built it will be transferred to the Federal VA.
 - All ongoing costs are covered by the Federal VA.
 - State of ND will not have ownership or fiscal responsibility in the future.

Outcome of bill:

- Construction of an estimated \$9 Million house located on or near Fargo VA Medical Center Campus.
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Thank you for your consideration.

Lonnie Wangen Commissioner-NDDVA

Fisher House Foundation builds comfort homes where military & veterans' families can stay free of charge, while a loved one is in the hospital.

- 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.
- Since inception, the program has saved military and veterans' families an estimated \$451 million in out-of-pocket costs for lodging and transportation.
- Source: <https://www.fisherhouse.org/about/>
- **Mission**
 - Funding construction of a Fisher House at the Fargo VA Medical Center where the families of patients can stay while their loved ones receive critical medical care.
- **About**
 - The Impact Foundation is raising funds to help Fisher House Foundation construct the first Fisher House in North Dakota. 100% of proceeds will go to help build 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.

Over 90 Fisher Houses in operation.

- Houses in our neighboring states
 - Minnesota- Minneapolis
 - Michigan-Ann Arbor
 - Nebraska-Omaha
 - Wisconsin-Milwaukee
 - Illinois-Chicago

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

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

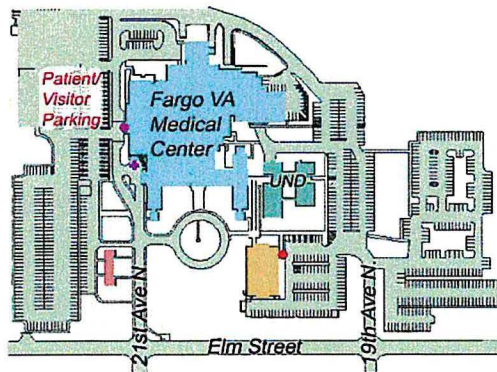
Federal VA biennium expenditures in North Dakota has surpassed **\$1 Billion**



Unofficial rendering of Fisher House ND-reflects local architecture

Location & Construction:

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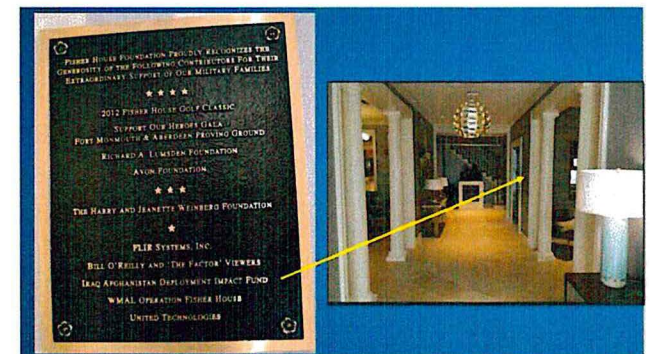
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Some veterans and their families travel more than **300 miles** to the Fargo VA.

The VA provides **medical help**. The **Fisher House** provides **housing help**.

The **Fisher House** serves **military families** who have sacrificed for their country by staying home **without** a spouse for long periods of time.

This is ***their*** contribution to our country's freedom and liberties.

The **Fisher House** is like a **Ronald McDonald House** for military families.

The families receive free lodging while their loved ones undergo treatment or surgery for ***serious illnesses***.

In addition, the **Fisher House** provides a place of **support** and **comfort** as military families can share stories with other families going through similar difficult times.

The **Fisher House** is a **\$9 million dollar** project with nearly **\$8 million** raised.

All the money raised goes to the building of the House.

Once construction has ended, the **Fisher House** is owned and funded by the federal government through the Veterans Administration.

The size of the **Fisher House** will be around **15 thousand square feet**.

There will be **15 to 16 family suites** with a full kitchen, and a large gathering room for families to visit.

To be sure, it is older veterans in need of critical care at the VA.

However, the VA is also seeing more younger veterans; those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan.

They too need help, and their families also need a home away from home during a difficult time.

Mr. Chairman, and committee members, I ask for your support of **HB 1157** which would provide a **one-time funding gift of \$500 thousand** dollars to the **Fisher House**.

Thank you for your consideration.

I am open for questions.

23.0556.01001
Title.

Prepared by the Legislative Council staff for
the Senate Appropriations - Human Resources
Division Committee

Fiscal No.1

March 29, 2023

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL NO. 1157

Page 1, line 5, remove "in the general fund in"

Page 1, line 6, replace "the state treasury" with "from federal funds derived from the state fiscal recovery fund"

Renumber accordingly

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT:

House Bill No. 1157 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Senate Action

	Base Budget	House Version	Senate Changes	Senate Version
Fisher house		\$500,000		\$500,000
Total all funds	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
Less estimated income	0	0	500,000	500,000
General fund	\$0	\$500,000	(\$500,000)	\$0
FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Department 321 - Department of Veterans' Affairs - Detail of Senate Changes

	Adjusts Funding for the Fisher House ¹	Total Senate Changes
Fisher house		
Total all funds	\$0	\$0
Less estimated income	500,000	500,000
General fund	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)
FTE	0.00	0.00

¹ One-time funding of \$500,000 for a grant to assist in the construction of the Fisher House at the Fargo Veterans' Affairs Medical Center is adjusted by removing funding from the general fund and adding funding from the federal State Fiscal Recovery Fund.