



Office of the Commission President

Secretary Robert Wilkie
Veteran Affairs
Washington, D.C.

Monday, September 14, 2020

Secretary Wilkie,

It is with great pleasure that I submit a letter of support for the construction of a Fisher House on the campus of the Fargo Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

When I first heard of this project, I was not aware that veterans and their families who travel up to 400 miles to visit the Fargo VA Medical Center might not have a comfortable place to stay. When I learned that the nearest facility to provide this level of comfort is in Minneapolis, I knew I needed to contact you with my support.

Our community and state is extraordinarily proud of the Fargo VA Medical Center. We recognize the exceptional service this facility provides to the exceptional men and women who have served our country. The level of service has also earned the Fargo VA Medical Center the momentous recognition of a National Excellence in Patient Experience Award.

The plans for the Fargo VA Fisher House calls for seven to 21 suites that will be available to 16 to 42 family members at no cost to the veteran or their family members. We recognize that Fargo VA Medical Center is one of 16 locations in the country with a recognized need. However, this house would serve a veteran population that is in desperate need of housing options for their families. The Fargo VA Medical Center service area spreads across one of the largest geographic regions in the country. Seventy-four percent of North Dakota veterans traveling to the center are from highly rural areas.

It is for these reasons I provide my full support and ask you to do the same.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bernie Dardis". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Bernie Dardis, Commission President
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