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Vicky Steiner, District 37, Dickinson.

It's a privilege and honor to bring this bill to you today. Thanks to Jim Nelson and the ND Veterans Legislative Council.

House Bill memorializes the military service of Dickinson soldier, Specialist Jon Fettig who died in Operation Iraqi Freedom July 22, 2003. He was an 11-year veteran of the 164<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. This is a project to place a bridge sign at the Heart River bridge on South State Avenue in Dickinson.

I remember seeing Jon as he worked at a local store in Dickinson. This sign will be a special tribute to his sacrifice in a foreign war to protect our country.

I'd like to highlight 3 points that touch my heart.

- 1. Military service often requires individuals to leave their families, endure rigorous training, and face the dangers of combat. Recognizing this sacrifice is essential in expressing gratitude. It's important to honor both those who serve and their families, who also bear the burden of separation and worry.
  2. Service members choose to dedicate their lives to protecting their country and its values. This commitment to duty, honor, and country deserves recognition and respect. Highlighting their bravery and selflessness reinforces the importance of their role in safeguarding freedom and democracy.
  3. Ultimately, expressing patriotic gratitude for military service is also about promoting peace and understanding. It reinforces the idea that while military service is often necessary, the ultimate goal is to create a world where such sacrifices are less needed.

In conclusion, patriotic gratitude for military service is a vital aspect of honoring those who protect and defend the nation. It encompasses recognition, support, and a commitment to fostering a society that values peace and freedom, built on the sacrifices of its service members.

Jon's parents, Larry and Shirley, are here today.

There is an emergency clause as the Council would like to get the project started this spring.

Please give House Bill 1140 a Do Pass recommendation Thank you.

## FAMILY REMEMBRANCES



**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD  
SPECIALIST JON P. FETTIG**

Died July 22, 2003  
Operation Iraqi Freedom

Age 30, of Dickinson, ND;  
assigned to the 957th Engineer  
Company (Multi-Role Bridge), ND  
Army National Guard, Bismarck,  
ND; died when his Heavy  
Expanded-Mobility Tactical Truck  
was hit by a rocket-propelled  
grenade outside of Ramadi, Iraq

Jon Fettig was an 11-year veteran of the 164th Engineer Battalion in Dickinson, North Dakota, who transferred to a National Guard unit in need of more Soldiers. The deployment meant Jon and his wife, Cody, would have to put their plans of starting a family on hold, but that did not stop Jon from being a devoted husband. Family was important to Jon and he called home whenever he could to speak to his wife, parents and younger siblings. The day before he died, Jon called his grandmother to wish her a happy birthday.

Jon lost his life when his unit was ambushed outside Ar Ramadi while traveling to the Euphrates River. He was with a convoy that was delivering supplies and dropping off Soldiers to relieve others with the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company on river patrol.

It's hard for Jon's family to accept the fact that they will never again pick up the phone to find him on the other end of the line, but are comforted by the memories. Because of the way he lived his life, there was never a question about how much he loved his family. Jon was 30 years old.