



"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