

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2011

Mr. Kenneth Fisher, Chairman, Board of Trustees
Fisher House Foundation, Inc.
1401 Rockville Pike, Suite 600
Rockville, Maryland 20852

Dear Mr. Fisher,

We are writing to express our full support for the construction of a second Fisher House at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System (VAPAHCS). This is a top priority for VA Palo Alto, its patients, and their families.

The VAPAHCS is a major tertiary care referral center. It provides primary, secondary and tertiary care within a large geographical region encompassing a 10 county, 13,500 square mile area. Today, over 272,000 veterans reside in VAPAHCS' primary service area, of which over 82,000 veterans are enrolled and receive treatment at VA Palo Alto's health care facilities.

While VAPAHCS' primary service area is quite large in terms of geography stretching from the Monterey Bay through the San Francisco Bay region to the Central Valley all the way to the Sierra Foothills, what makes Palo Alto most unique is that the Health Care System houses every major regional and national treatment center that VA has to offer. In fact, VAPAHCS is the only VA Health Care System to provide all three rehabilitation programs: Polytrauma, Blind and Spinal Cord injury. There isn't another VA medical center in the United States with the breadth and scope of services commensurate to what VAPAHCS has to offer.

VAPAHCS' Fisher House #1 opened in 2006 to serve veterans' families, to provide onsite accommodations free of charge, while their loved ones receive treatment. The Palo Alto Fisher House provides overnight accommodations for nearly 800 families each year. While most of these families reside in Northern California, a subset are referred to Palo Alto from throughout the United States and nearly 25 percent (nearly 200) are families of Active Duty servicemembers sent to Palo Alto for specialized treatment including Polytrauma, Blind Rehabilitation and Spinal Cord Injury. Over the past several years, the existing Palo Alto Fisher House and its accommodations of 21 suites has been unable to keep up with the influx of referrals. In 2010, the Fisher House maintained a waiting list of 615 families and was unable to house 300 families because of limited accommodations.

The second Fisher House will ensure ALL eligible families have access to free onsite accommodations and that no family is turned away from accessing the Fisher House, since the second facility will have the capacity to accommodate today's unmet demand.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines often arrive at VA Palo Alto unable to walk, talk or even perform basic bodily functions. The dedicated team of therapists, doctors, nurses and other caregivers, in conjunction with the amazing attitudes of the service members themselves, perform daily miracles. The second Fisher House will be there for our veterans going through long-term rehabilitation programs, including traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury and vision rehabilitation and would add immeasurably to the comfort and morale of our troops and their families.

We encourage you to make this a top priority and we want you to know that we are fully committed to doing everything we can to help make the second Fisher House a reality.

Thank you for your consideration of this very important request.

Sincerely,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Sam Farr
Member of Congress



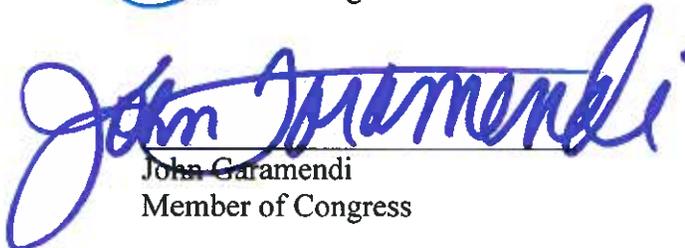
Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



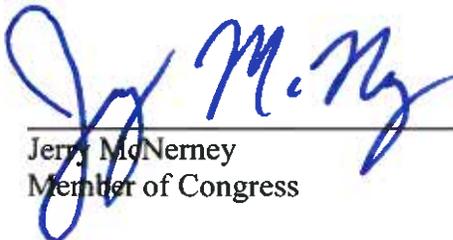
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



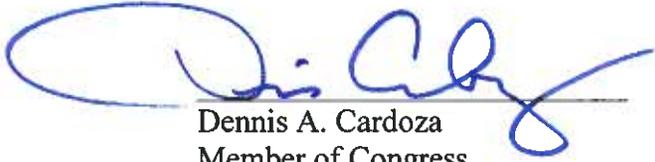
George Miller
Member of Congress



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Jerry McNerney
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Dennis A. Cardoza
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
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