

Support for Senator Heitkamp's Connect with Veterans Act

“I would like to commend Senator Heitkamp for introducing the Connect with Veterans Act. It's clear that our nation must do a better job of taking care of our veterans. A good first step is figuring out how best to welcome veterans into our communities, and that's the goal of this initiative. This program makes it easier for veterans to receive information about programs, services and initiatives which can assist them and importantly, it includes local control. North Dakota's booming economy has brought many challenges to our state but has also opened up thousands of jobs which need to be filled. This initiative offers a path for cities and counties to directly contact veterans about job opportunities, helping veterans and communities throughout the state. Senator Heitkamp's bill is a great step forward for places like Watford City and I'm proud to express my support for the Connect with Veterans Act.”

- *Brent Sanford, Watford City Mayor*

“As proposed, this act should ease the transition from being in the service to civilian life in a local community. This is important to a community like Minot where some number of service-members separate from the Air Force each year. The Chamber is pleased that Senator Heitkamp is introducing this legislation and looks forward to working with the Senator as this proposal works its way through the legislative process.”

- *L. John MacMartin, Minot Area Chamber of Commerce President*

“Our veterans are a vital resource to our communities. We owe it to our veterans to seek them out and do all that we can to reintegrate them into our communities and the work-force. Their training and expertise is unmatched. Through Senator Heitkamp's Connect with Veterans bill, veterans will have better access to information about programs, services and initiatives which can assist them in their transition from military life to civilian life; communities and employers will have a valuable resource to seek out qualified veterans for community leadership roles and filling job vacancies with a highly skilled workforce. I greatly appreciate Senator Heitkamp's efforts to make sure our veterans have the tools to succeed when they finish their tours of duty.”

- *Tom Ford, Grand Forks Region Base Realignment Impact Committee Coordinator*

“The Connect with Veterans Act would enable County Veterans Service Officers and other county leaders to utilize a database of contact information for newly-separated veterans submitted on a strictly voluntary basis. Such a database would not only bolster existing efforts, but also give counties without dedicated personnel the ability to reach veterans and their families at the earliest possible point in the transition process. I thank Senator Heitkamp for her leadership on this important issue and willingness to implement this much-needed information, which will enable counties to reach out with support to our nation's transitioning servicemembers.”

- *Riki Hokama, National Association of Counties President*

"The Connect with Veterans Act will provide a vital tool to help local communities connect with service members early in their transition process and enhance their access to a wide range of services, such as education, benefits, employment, health care, housing and child care. Through the leadership of Senator Heitkamp, we have been able to take an important issue identified by our communities and turn it into a feasible concept that will have significant impact around the country."

- *Michael Cooper, Association of Defense Communities President*