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Legislators Sponsor Bills to Use P3s to Develop VA Facilities.

A new Senate bill could pave the way for the use of public-private partnerships to develop facilities for military veterans.

[S. 2958](#), introduced by Sen. Deb Fischer (R-Neb.) on May 19, would set up a pilot program through which the Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) could enter into up to five P3s to build or modify medical facilities costing at least \$10 million or to build or expand VA cemeteries.

State or local agencies, nonprofit organizations, donors and private developers would be eligible to pursue such projects or donate funds to support them.

The bill specifies that one of these projects would involve the design, financing and building of a new ambulatory care center in Omaha, Neb., for which the secretary would be authorized to spend up to \$56 million. The VA has expressed interest in building a clinic near an aging hospital in Omaha, reported [Omaha.com](#).

For each project developed under the legislation, the private partner would have to establish a board that would oversee project financing, design and construction. Each board must include a VA employee and a military veteran who is unaffiliated with the department.

The bill has been referred to the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

This legislation is similar to [H.R. 5099](#), introduced by Rep. Brad Ashford (D-Neb.) in late April, which has been referred to the Health Subcommittee of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee.

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