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May 22, 2005

General Lloyd "Fig" Newton  
BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington VA 22202

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Dear General Newton;

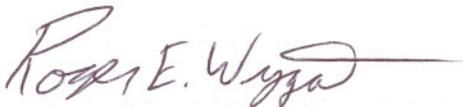
I am writing to you today in hopes of correcting what I see as a very serious mistake. The closing of Cannon AFB as suggested by the Department of Defense, can only be a mistake. Cannon AFB today is a very important piece of our country's national defense, both present and in the future. In reality, Cannon AFB does not fit the published criteria provided for base closure. It is quite possible those responsible for making the decision didn't have all the current information available.

Cannon AFB has no encroachment problems, unlike other bases built in large metropolitan areas. Several years ago, the local and state governments purchased land surrounding the base to prevent this problem from happening. Just seconds from take-off, a pilot can enter one of the largest training ranges in the Southwest. This allows the pilot the opportunity to immediately begin his training operations, thus saving on fuel and other costs associated with long flying times to a range. In a few short weeks, when the New Mexico Training Range initiative is finalized, aircraft will be able to fly supersonic, offering a very realistic training scenario. I don't see this happening in many of our current urban bound Air Force bases. The Air Force claim is to train the way they are going to fight. I really don't see how training could get much more realistic than being able to practice the way you will actually have to fight.

Cannon AFB presently has the space and facilities to expand to accommodate any joint war fighting and training effort imaginable. All of the major runways have recently been rebuilt, and are capable of handling any aircraft in the inventory. In the past months, C-17 and C-5 aircraft have made frequent stops to return or pick up Cannon troops from a variety of real world contingencies.

I served with you at Holloman AFB. I was instrumental in establishing the Gold Flag program, and briefed you on the importance of this money saving program. Today, as a Civil Service Contracting Specialist, I am still attempting to save the Air Force money. Closing Cannon AFB will not save money, really just the opposite, it will cost more, if we allow this valuable base to close. By the time the mistake has been realized, it will be too late, and the damage done. I appreciate the fact that you are coming back out to New Mexico to see how Cannon AFB fits into the national defense picture now and far into the future. Let us show you what we at Cannon AFB have known for more than sixty years, that we have what it takes to remain a vital link in the defense of the United States. I think the F-22 aircraft would be a perfect match for Cannon AFB, similar to what Holloman AFB provided for the F-117. New Mexico is Air Force friendly, and we only ask for the chance to continue proving this fact.

Sincerely,



Roger E. Wygant