

June 1st, 2005

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Dear members of the BRAC Commission,

I am writing to you today to ask you to kindly reconsider the decision to place Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico, on the list for closure. There are countless reasons that Cannon should not even be on the list in the first place.

1. Cannon has an abundance of air space and no encroachment issues. Doesn't that provide safe training scenarios for pilots? That is somewhat rare throughout the US. Once the N.M. Training Range is implemented, pilots will have the ability to fly supersonic during training missions.
2. The Melrose bombing range is seconds from the end of the runway at Cannon, allowing for maximum fuel efficiency and training.
3. Cannon has the space and facilities to accommodate joint war-fighting, training, and readiness, as was evidenced by the recent joint training effort between Cannon and the US Navy.
4. The availability of air space and ideal flying weather makes Cannon the perfect candidate to support future training missions for the F-22, Joint Strike Fighter, and other military aircraft.
5. Clovis, Portales, Eastern New Mexico, West Texas (including Amarillo and Lubbock) are home to a large military retiree population. These people rely on Cannon for healthcare, grocery shopping, and more. There is not another installation close by to serve our retired military.
6. Large amounts of money were recently spent on new runways at Cannon.
7. The nearby communities have reached out and supported this base like no other over the last 50 years. In the early 90's Curry County, in conjunction with the state of NM, purchased air easements around Cannon and GAVE them to the Air Force. The local community purchased the land north of Cannon and GAVE it to the Air Force for additional housing, now known as Chavez Manor. Within the last few years, our community purchased land west of Cannon and GAVE it to the Air Force for the installation of instrument lighting on the alternate runway at the base. Our leaders have spearheaded the effort to expand and convert the air space to supersonic capability through the N.M. Training Range Initiative. Closing this particular base is going to have far reaching, devastating effects on this entire area.

I understand that your task is unbelievably difficult, however it is one that should be given careful consideration, for the sake of all concerned. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Janis Bethurum

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