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June 14, 2005

James D. Floyd
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The Honorable James V. Hansen
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Sir;

I am writing this letter in support of retaining Cannon Air Force Base.

Cannon has attributes that cannot be duplicated elsewhere. Cannon has a bombing range within minutes of the air base. Cannon also have significant airspace and an electronic warfare range. Supersonic airspace allowances for Cannon Air Force Base's 27th Fighter Wing, the New Mexico Air National Guard and others, are pending. The base has supported more than 100 aircraft in the past. More significantly, Cannon does not have encroachment issues, or noise limitations, that limit or prevent operations that so limit operations elsewhere. Cannon has a safe environment for operational issues. Cannon has nearly limitless flying opportunities and could operate around the clock.

BRAC criteria should have demonstrated Cannon's value, and therefore have precluded it being placed on a closure list. Closure of facilities that are inefficient, encroached upon, have noise (operational) limitations, present major issues in the event of mishaps, and/or have issues with the local populace/governments should have been the focus. The fact that a desirable facility possesses an older fielded fleet is a circumstance that has been faced repeatedly in the past. If we had closed every facility that incurred an equipment/fleet conversion, we would have closed nearly every facility the military ever possessed. This is one of those situations. It appears that the Department of Defense (DoD) selected Cannon based on the equipment/fleet, rather than the facility value. We will continue to park fleets, but we must retain the prime facilities that our future fleets will require. Cannon is one of the future facilities.

There are also two other issues relative to this BRAC that concern me. First, is the inclusion of forecasted overseas unit reassignments to the United States. These overseas unit returns are not a done deal and are not necessarily part of what you are to examine, or what our Congress will be asked to vote on. Our Department of State, our mutual defense treaties, and the world's political situation, will affect negotiations relative to these units return. To place them in the BRAC is akin to throwing some states a bone, albeit with a rope attached. This BRAC could be approved, and subsequently the

forecasted units not return. Our citizens will believe that they have been deceived and our politicians that have participated in the BRAC process will have good reason not to believe our DoD leaders in the future. The second issue has to do with the term "military value." We should have learned from previous experiences that placing all of our assets near coastal cities is shortsighted. Having the ability to respond quickly is an asset. However, being able to respond quickly becomes moot if we are to engage in wars/conflicts/actions that last longer than days. Lately, our wars, and the follow-on responsibilities have lasted for decades. The ability to send our forces in quickly soon became irrelevant. Further, exposing the same assets to hurricanes and seaborne threats is not necessary. One may recall that during the tragic 9/11 disaster that our President was not transported to our coastal bases at Langley or Shaw, but rather to a much safer location centrally located away from Washington and coasts. With our southern border, we need our military placed where we can respond and yet not be in immediate danger.

The local community supports Cannon and has done so for many years. In addition to growing up as a military dependent, I spent more than 30 years in the military and can speak with experience that the local community is military-friendly.

The official BRAC Internet site presents success stories for post-BRAC facilities. Unfortunately, there are very few success stories. Naturally, the site doesn't not show the disasters left in post-BRAC's wake. Eastern New Mexico would be one of those disasters. The DoD's released data seriously underestimates the impact to this already economically disadvantaged state. The implications would be far-reaching. Comments stating that Cannon could be converted in a major business function are not based on logic, but rather on wishful thinking, or excuses. One need only to examine the history of the business arena of eastern New Mexico to understand that conversion is not an opportunity, but rather an economic liability in the making. Sugarcoating past actions further leads to a loss of credibility of not only our DoD, but also our entire government. To some, a half-truth is not an acceptable practice to communicate. Showing only the few success stories and ignoring the disasters left elsewhere is such a half-truth.

Clovis has experienced a BRAC before and also had a post-95 BRAC with the retirement of the EF-111A. The repercussions lasted through 2002. There is no way to minimize the impact that the closure of Cannon would have on the local community. It would destroy the economy in this area. One has only to look at Walker Air Force Base, which closed in 1967, and Roswell to verify that closure is not a temporary economic issue. Roswell still hasn't recovered to the point of before Walker's closure. Clovis has supported Cannon and the US Air Force for more than 50 years. The people of eastern New Mexico and west Texas continue to support Cannon and Cannon's military families.

We need your help in removing Cannon from the proposed closure list. Cannon Air Force Base is essential to ensuring the future capabilities of the US Air Force and our military. Thanks for your time and attention.

James D. Floyd
James D. Floyd
CMSgt, USAF, Retired

June 15, 2005

James D. Floyd
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The Honorable Philip Coyle
BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
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