

DCN 9945  
Executive Correspondence

**United States Senate**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

BRAC Commission

September 13, 2005

**SEP 14 2005**

Received

Mr. Anthony J. Principi  
Chairman, BRAC 2005 Independent Commission  
2521 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Tony:

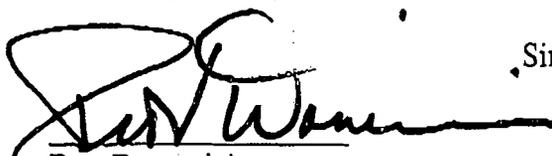
We want to thank you for your service and leadership on the Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission. We applaud your efforts to provide balance in the Commission's deliberations. This was an incredibly difficult and challenging undertaking by all accounts.

We write to express our confusion and dismay over one aspect of the Commission's actions -- the recusals of two Commissioners from two votes concerning the future of Cannon Air Force Base (AFB). As you know, both Commissioners Bilbray and Hansen were recused from voting on Commissioner Newton's motion to allow the realignment of the 27th Fighter Wing and move the Air Force's Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals from Moody Air Force Base to Cannon AFB. Likewise, they were recused on the motion by Commissioner Skinner to establish a military enclave at Cannon after realigning the 27th. As we stated in previous correspondence, we believe these recusals were unnecessary and may have led to unnecessary damage to the communities surrounding and supporting Cannon AFB.

In response to concerns we voiced on this issue, it was our understanding that the Commission was considering an alternative approach that would have stripped specific asset recommendations from the Air Force BRAC list, thereby allowing all the Commissioners to vote on the underlying recommendation to close Cannon. We were sorely disappointed that the Commission did not implement this alternative, and dismayed that we were not informed that the Commission had rejected this approach.

No one can be certain how these recusals might have impacted Cannon's future. However, for the record of this BRAC round and the integrity of all future BRAC actions, the logic behind these recusals needs to be explained, as does the Commission's decision not to pursue the alternative strategy to avoid recusals. Accordingly, we respectfully request a written explanation of the rationale behind the recusals as well as an explanation of the Commission's consideration and rejection of the alternative.

Again, we thank you for your efforts and await your reply.



Pete Domenici  
United States Senator

Sincerely,



Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senator

DCN 9945  
Executive Correspondence  
OFFICE OF SENATOR JEFF BINGAMAN

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: *Chairman Principi* FROM: *Sen. Jeff Bingaman*

COMPANY: DATE:

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