

State of New Mexico
House of Representatives
Santa Fé



BEN LUJÁN
Speaker of the House
D-Santa Fé County
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VIA HAND-DELIVERY

June 21, 2005

Chairman Anthony J. Principi
Base Realignment and Closure Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Dear Honorable Chairman Principi:

As the Speaker of the House of the New Mexico House of Representatives, I want to join our local, state and congressional leaders in our opposition to the recommendation by the Defense Department to close Cannon Air Force Base as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

This BRAC process was supposed to be about closing bases that cannot deliver real military value for the country. Cannon has always ranked at the top of military bases for providing tremendous military value particularly, because of the no encroachment and unrestricted airspace. It is a modern and, by every previous evaluation a well documented fact, one of the most cost effective bases in the nation. The soon to be completed New Mexico Training Initiative that was omitted from the evaluation would be a tremendous lost investment if the recommendation for closure moves forward. It seems quite clear that Cannon deserves a re-evaluation to properly take into consideration the significant qualitative aspects of these elements difficult to find in other parts of the nation.

It is unfortunate that a state that has consistently supported its military bases as well as its military personnel now faces potential economic devastation. The legislative support is epitomized by legislation I personally sponsored that resulted in the increase of life insurance for military personnel which passed and signed into law in February of 2005. New Mexico was the first state in the nation to claim this kind of unprecedented support for military personnel serving in the National Guard.

The most supportive people who have built their lives around these installations will become the casualties of war in their own country. If Secretary Rumsfeld's Defense Department



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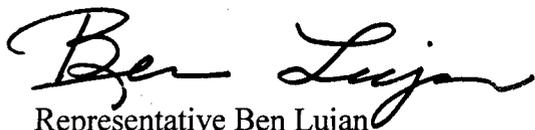
COMMITTEES:
Rules & Order of Business
Taxation & Revenue
Voters & Elections

INTERIM COMMITTEES:
Indian Affairs Committee
Land Grant Committee
Legislative Council
Los Alamos National Laboratory Oversight
New Mexico Finance Authority Oversight
Public School Capital Outlay Task Force
Revenue Stabilization & Tax Policy
Water & Natural Resources

recommendations are adopted, New Mexico will face thousands of lost jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in lost economic activity, but most importantly the loss of a facility that has been critical to our national defense. The city, surrounding communities and businesses will face a tremendous burden of rebuilding their lives and communities when they lose their lifelong investment in Cannon.

On behalf of the citizens of New Mexico, I respectfully request that appropriate reconsideration be given in re-evaluating the closure of the Cannon Air Force Base and its profound military value to this country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Lujan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Ben" and "Lujan" being significantly larger and more prominent.

Representative Ben Lujan
Speaker of the House
New Mexico House of Representatives

cc: The Honorable Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico