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RECEIVED
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May 17, 2005

BRAC Commission
2521 South Clark Street
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

Commissioners:

I work for ENMRSH, Inc., a non-profit organization in Clovis, New Mexico that provides a wide array of services to individuals with disabilities. This letter provides a brief, but important plea to reconsider the recommendation to close Cannon Air Force Base (CAFB).

One of our primary service sites is CAFB. For nearly two decades ENMRSH, Inc. has formed a solid reciprocal relationship with CAFB by furnishing individuals with disabilities to complete contract work at the dining hall, commissary, and switchboard. Through our relationship we not only meet a distinct military need, but also provide individuals with disabilities rehabilitation, meaningful work, and opportunities for a life that would otherwise be unattainable. Our affiliation with the Air Force and individuals with disabilities is important to society at large.

Additionally, the community has embraced this military installation and formed a mutually beneficial association – removing CAFB from our area would cause financial and social hardships beyond belief. As shown in the Department of Defense (DoD) economic impact analysis, Clovis and CAFB have formed an exceptional, productive, and dependant economic connection over the years. The ripple effect of closing the base would continue for countless years to come. In general, the monetary impact of closing CAFB would be devastating to the town of Clovis; there is a strong chance that we would never recover.

I ask you to reconsider the recommendation to close CAFB based on three reasonable conclusions. First, closure would result in sweeping unemployment for the disadvantaged individuals served by ENMRSH. The individuals with disabilities will face vulnerability, poverty, and a reduced social status because unemployment will be inevitable. Additionally, the community of Clovis will be shattered. We have fostered innumerable connections with CAFB that are irreplaceable. Last, I believe CAFB currently holds unacknowledged military value and has the potential to become an even greater asset to our country in the

future. For example, Clovis has over 320 days of ideal flying weather, lack of encroachment on the base or in the flying space, and the ability to expand and evolve without problems caused by being located in the center of a metropolitan area. Many of the beneficial aspects of CAFB were not considered in the DoD analysis.

Please understand that I understand the reasons for transforming our armed forces to meet modern threats. However, the transformation can be completed without belittling and desecrating the lives of American citizens. A suitable solution should combine measures that will strengthen our military capabilities while preserving the livelihood of citizens that have willingly and exuberantly provided decades of support to CAFB.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Houfek', with a large, stylized initial 'D' and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Damian Houfek

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