

May 20, 2005

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KTS

Cathey A. Cline
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Portales, NM 88130

The Honorable James H. Bilbray:

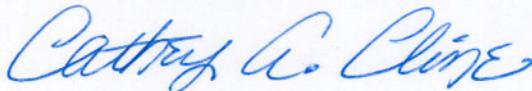
I am very concerned about the BRAC Commission's decision to close Cannon Air Force Base. I do not believe the Commission is fully aware of the unique attributes that Cannon offers to our national defense. These include an abundance of air space and no encroachment issues, a bombing range that is only seconds away, the airspace to fly at supersonic speeds, and ideal year-round flying weather, among many others.

In addition to the military value to the nation, Cannon has been supported over the last 50 years by the local communities like no other in the country. We consider Cannon a part of our family.

The closure of Cannon will also have a devastating impact on our economy. It has been estimated that the area will lose at least 20 percent of its workforce, plus the ripple effect that we will have on our public and higher education systems.

Please reconsider all the facts before making your final decision. For your convenience, I have enclosed a copy of reasons that I believe Cannon AFB should remain active.

Respectfully Yours,



Cathey A. Cline

cc:

The Honorable Anthony J. Principi
The Honorable Philip Coyle
Admiral Harold W. Gehman Jr.
The Honorable James V. Hansen
General James T. Hill
General Lloyd W. Newton
The Honorable Samuel K. Skinner
Brigadier General Sue E. Turner

1. Cannon does not fit the criteria provided for base closure
2. Once the New Mexico Training Range Initiative is implemented, Cannon will be able to offer pilots the ability to fly supersonic during training missions.
3. The weather in eastern New Mexico provides year-around training.
4. The Melrose bombing range is seconds away from Cannon.
5. Cannon has the space and facilities to accommodate joint warfare training and readiness.
6. Cannon has ample space/ramp space to accommodate surge force requirements in training and emergency situations.
7. 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.
8. The relationship between Cannon and the surrounding towns: Clovis, Portales, West Texas and others, is unlike any other installation in the country.
9. The entire area, including Amarillo and Lubbock, is home to a large military retiree population. These retirees rely on Cannon for healthcare, grocery shopping and more. There is not another installation close by to serve retired military.
10. In the early 90s, Curry County, in conjunction with the state of New Mexico, purchased air easements around Cannon and gave them to the Air Force. This was done to protect the air space from encroachment.
11. The local community purchased the land north of Cannon and gave it back to the Air Force for additional housing.
12. The local community purchased land west of Cannon and gave it back to the Air Force for the installation of instrument lighting on the alternate runway at the base.
13. The local community spearheaded the effort to expand and convert the airspace to supersonic capability through the New Mexico Training Range Initiative.
14. It has been estimated that the closing of Cannon will cost this area the loss of more jobs, percentage-wise, than any other area in the country.
15. The closing of Cannon will have a severe ripple effect on the economy of the entire state and West Texas.
16. The closing of Cannon will have a very negative impact on education throughout the area, including the public schools and Eastern New Mexico University and Clovis Community College.