

The Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
The Honorable James H. Bilbray  
2521 S. Clark St.  
Arlington, VA 22202

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5/23/05  
KTY

18 May, 2005

Dear Sir:

I am asking you to reconsider the BRAC decision to close Cannon Air Force Base near the eastern New Mexico towns of Clovis and Portales. Some of the reasons are as follows:

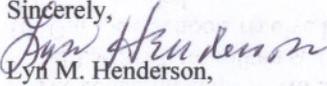
1. Cannon's active role in training and participation in the defense of our Nation for over 50 years.
2. The potential supersonic air space and average 360 flying days a year weather-wise.
3. The combat readiness of the Wing.
4. The top status award winning Maintenance Unit.
5. The lack of encroachment upon and by the civilian community.
6. The recent extension of the runways the new tower, the security beefing up of the overpass and guard entrance to the Base, and the hundreds of dollars allocated for other improvements which will be spent.
7. The many Base facilities offering support to the Service Men and their families:
  - Excellent recreational facilities.
  - Family Support services.
  - Medical and pharmaceutical availability.
  - A well supplied and appointed commissary and Base Exchange
  - All of which are frequented and used by the active duty military and their families and the thousands of military retirees for hundreds of miles around.
8. The educational availability of Eastern New Mexico University and Clovis Community College
9. The economic impact will be devastating to many of the local businesses and industries.
  - 20.50% Micropolitan statistical area, the largest loss of any of the listed closures.
10. Our local schools receive badly needed federal monetary support based on the number of military children enrolled.
11. The reasonable cost of living, a distinct factor in this area, and benefit to enlistees, and the real-estate industry will be severely impacted, taking a major hit with present and proposed housing starts.
12. The loss of several thousand civil service jobs to the communities of Clovis and Portales

On a personal note, my late husband served 28 ½ years in the USAF; a tour in Korea and two tours in Viet Nam. He was shot down on his second tour in 1971, miraculously found and picked up by the Army. We have had many duty stations and have lived in many places in the world with two tours at Cannon AFB. We decided to retire in Clovis partly because of the receptiveness, hospitality and the spirit of the community. (One of the communities we once lived near had signs on property stating "Military Keep Off Grass"). Our three children graduated from Clovis High School, are all successful, and the eldest is currently on active duty with the AF having just returned from a deployment to Afghanistan.

Unlike many communities having a running battle with military installations over noise and encroachment, the communities of Clovis and Portales want the base, and feel that the sound of the jets is the sound of freedom.

Please reconsider the decision to close Cannon AFB. Increase its mission as it has the capacity and infrastructure to grow and the continued support of the surrounding communities and its people.

Sincerely,

  
Lyn M. Henderson,  
Widow of Lt. Col. (Ret.) Warren L. Henderson  
1613 Fairway Terrace,  
Clovis, NM 88101

WPS