



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

DCN 8575

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

AUG 17 2005

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bingaman

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Rumsfeld concerning the possible use of Cannon AFB for the Airborne Laser (ABL) aircraft. I agree with you that Cannon, like our other installation assets, represents tremendous capability. However, we find ourselves with more assets than we need to accomplish our mission. The support we have enjoyed over the years from all our community partners has been invaluable. I personally, and the Base Closure Executive Group (BCEG) collectively, felt the heavy burden of the potential impact that our recommendations would have on our friends in the Clovis area. We did not make these recommendations lightly or without serious deliberation.

During its deliberations, the BCEG considered the requirements for future systems. For example, the BCEG voted to retain Holloman AFB, adjacent to the White Sands Range, to possibly beddown future unmanned systems like the Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems. Regarding the ABL mission, the Missile Defense Agency has established several milestones that must be met prior to finalizing any production decision. Assuming the ABL meets them, delivery to the Air Force will be no earlier than the 2015 fiscal year. Although the ABL is in the early stages of development, the BCEG still reviewed the projected requirements. The initial planning factors for ABL basing include runway, taxiways and parking ramp stressed for 747 type aircraft, runway dimensions a minimum of 10,600 x 150 ft, 75 ft wide taxiways, two 747 sized hangars, and a 140 acre laser chemical mixture and storage facility. Our analysis indicates there is sufficient capacity at remaining Air Force installations to house not only the ABL but other emerging missions as well.

I hope this response has answered your questions and, as always, we stand ready to respond to future inquiries.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Maureen J. Koetz".

MAUREEN. KOETZ, Esq.
Acting, Assistant Secretary
Installations, Environment & Logistics

cc: Mr. Tony Principi, Chairman, Base Closure and Realignment Commission
General Lloyd Newton, Commissioner, Base Closure and Realignment Commission



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WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

AUG 17 2005

The Honorable Peter V. Domenici
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Domenici

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Rumsfeld concerning the possible use of Cannon AFB for the Airborne Laser (ABL) aircraft. I agree with you that Cannon, like our other installation assets, represents tremendous capability. However, we find ourselves with more assets than we need to accomplish our mission. The support we have enjoyed over the years from all our community partners has been invaluable. I personally, and the Base Closure Executive Group (BCEG) collectively, felt the heavy burden of the potential impact that our recommendations would have on our friends in the Clovis area. We did not make these recommendations lightly or without serious deliberation.

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