

May 23, 2005

BRAC commission
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600
Arlington, Va., 22202

Dear BRAC commission,

I am writing in regards to closure of Cannon Air Force Base. I am writing to ask you to reconsider your decision to close the base. I believe that you have made a tragic mistake in your decision to close Cannon Air Force Base. The town of Clovis has relied on the base since its reopening fifty years ago. The base has become one of the major employers for the city and the loss of it would be devastating to all of New Mexico and many other parts of the country. I have had the privilege to get to know some of the families who considered Clovis their home. The community of Clovis is a tight knit group who takes pride in their community, friendships, and in Cannon Air Force Base. Clovis and the surrounding community rely strongly on the base and the support it gives to the community. The town and surrounding community would ultimately die if the base closed.

I have been fortunate enough to meet several families from Clovis, who work at the base. I have found that they not only support their own community but also most other communities throughout the country and several parts of the world. One family in particular I have grown quite close to travels throughout most of New Mexico and Texas. They often go shopping and stay in those communities. I have also heard stories from that family about other people who work at the base and travel around the country and the world. Many of the families who live in Clovis also keep homes in nearby the nearby town of Logan, which is a recreational lake area. The members of Clovis largely support that town, which would perish should the base close.

Since hearing that the base would close I have done research about the base and why it would be wrong to close the base. Here are all of the reasons I have found:

The base has an abundance of air space and no encroachment issues. This provides for safer and more realistic training scenarios for pilots.

- Once the New Mexico Training Range Initiative is implemented, we will be able to offer pilots the ability to fly supersonic during training missions. This is a very important point, as it allows the Air Force to better train for real-life situations.
- The weather in Eastern New Mexico provides year round training ability.
- The Melrose bombing range is seconds from the end of the runway at Cannon. This allows pilots to get airborne, and immediately begin training operations over the bombing range, rather than spending all of their fuel just to get to the range, having one pass over, and then returning to the base.
- Cannon has the space and facilities to accommodate joint war-fighting, training, and readiness as was evidenced by the recent joint training effort between Cannon and the US Navy.
- Cannon has ample space/ramp space to accommodate surge force requirements in training and emergency situations.
- 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.
- Cannon has won countless awards, both on ACC level, Air Force and NAF levels, and national and STAT levels.
- The relationship between Cannon Air Force Base and the surrounding towns; Clovis, Portales, West Texas, and others, is unlike any other installation in the country.
- Clovis, Portales, Eastern New Mexico, West Texas (including Amarillo and Lubbock) are home to a large military retiree population. These people rely on Cannon Air Force base for healthcare, grocery shopping, and more. There is not another installation close by to serve our retired military.

Thank you,



Matthew Sanders



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