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**San Antonio, TX 78258**

BRAC Commission  
2521 South Clarke Street  
Arlington, VA 22202

23 May 2005

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to voice my chagrin and concern over the Department of Defense decision to include Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico, on their suggested closure candidate list. I am unable to understand how that decision fits into any logical set of circumstances concerning the factors which should be used in making such decisions.

I am a former member of the 27<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing stationed at Cannon AFB. I served as the Wing Assistant Deputy Commander for Operations; the Deputy Commander for Operations, the Vice Wing Commander and as Wing Commander from 1874 to 1978. I think I know that base and the surrounding community. I also have considerable military experience, having served in the Air Force for over 34 years.

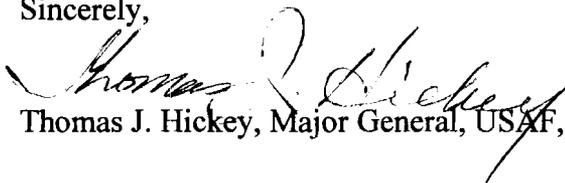
For these reasons I find it unbelievable that any thoughtful review would close that base. It has both an expansive Air to Air Range and a complete Air to Ground Range. There is an abundance of low-level training routes surrounding the base. The base itself is well contained, and easily protected and secured. In this time of 'dispersal', as described for the actions proposed for the Capital area, Cannon represents a perfect example of a separate, but total basing package.

In my years there, I found the local community to be the most patriotic, militarily supportive, and just plain friendly of any base I was assigned. They have a world-wide reputation for such support throughout the Air Force, and I would guess within the Defense department.

In considering the local economic impact of base closure on that community, some of Cannons military attributes are a distinct disadvantage to the City of Clovis. Cannon is the ONLY significant employer within 100 miles. There are no other large industries. I currently live in San Antonio, Texas. When the last closure effort closed Kelly AFB, there was a great hue and cry about the impact on San Antonio. As you may know, that loss has been significantly overcome by good aggressive salesmanship and ingenuity. Many business entities are now a part of 'Kelly USA'. Unfortunately, there are no alternative businesses within shouting distance of Clovis. Cannons' closure can only be described as a permanent financial disaster for the city. Is this how we reward loyalty and support from our local communities?

I can only hope that your members will have a more reasoned and reasonable approach to this process.

Sincerely,

  
Thomas J. Hickey, Major General, USAF, Ret'd.

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