

May 20, 2005

BRAC COMMISSION  
2521 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202



Dear BRAC COMMISSIONERS:

As a concerned citizen of Clovis, New Mexico and for the keeping of Cannon Air Force Base, I want you to hear my personal reasons for taking Cannon off the base closure list.

I feel this was a judgment call made without knowing all the pertinent facts which make Cannon a special base. I want you to consider this plea along with those of our community and surrounding area.

First of all we have over 300 good flying days a year. We have bright sunny weather with very little rain or snow. It is excellent for daytime or night flying maneuvers. This makes for perfect training. When citizens hear the plans flying at night or zooming around in the day, I thank God for allowing them to protect us and our nation.

The additional air space that is currently being negotiated for purchase will allow for greater missions for many different planes which need supersonic airspace.

The Melrose bombing range is only seconds away for great training and blends into our farm land with no problems. It is vital to training missions for war time planes to practice maneuvers.

The air force personal that come into Clovis are looking for families to take them under their wings and offer them a place to belong. We do this without reluctance. We can help them meet each need whether it be to find schools for their children, homes to rent or buy, suggestions of places to eat, or shop. We bring them into our churches and offer them closeness to God as a family. We comfort them when they have family members who must be deployed. We give them our hugs when they are ill or loose a loved one. These are some of the reasons why many who are stationed here make a personal reason to come back to Clovis to retire.

Our military retirees now are a great number of our area population and have a great voice in our local, state and national government. Many are getting up in years. They are very concerned over this disturbing news that a group of Government officials can actually change the course of their lives with a single stroke of a pen. Many veteran retirees serve on local civic government positions; have teaching positions, and other income which make their income taxes higher. Still they are able to maintain their independence and be productive citizens. Many returned to Clovis or elected to retire here because of our lower cost of living. Property taxes are very low and housing is very affordable.

There is a brand new Veteran's Clinic in our community and many military families use this facility as well as the state of the art Commissary on base. The local hospital has just hired 60 new doctors to help provide the medical needs for the military when the base hospital was closed. They are doing major renovations to the Emergency Room, and adding a Cancer and Heart Wing. The hospital would not have considered making these costly improvements if they had had knowledge Cannon Air Force Base closing. This news is depleting so much of our local economy and will severely hurt our economic base for our surrounding businesses.

The two area colleges are also a great plus factor as all the military and their families can continue to work on furthering their education while they are stationed here in Clovis or Portales. They offer online classes as well to not hinder their busy schedules. They offer child care as well.

I want to personally plead with you to consider and reconsider your previous decision and consider the impact on our local area communities and our economy.

In addition the air force personal stationed here at Cannon do not want to leave Clovis. Countless families want to stay here, but will go if sent somewhere else, but if given the choice, Clovis is like no other home to them.

Sincerely, Lt Col (Ret) Robert E Hayter + Ret