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May 30, 2005

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

RE: Recommended closure of Cannon AFB Clovis, New Mexico

Dear Commissioners.

My husband and I are sending this letter as a request for information to justify the recommended closure of Cannon AFB. Unlike many Americans our motivations are not always for personal or political reasons. While being raised as "Air Force Brats" taught us that personal sacrifice to ensure our freedom is sometimes necessary, we do not believe this decision makes sense. Since Cannon does not meet the criteria outlined for base closures and its attributes are so valuable, we need to understand your reasoning.

Although I would like to thank your commission for stimulating our interest in learning more about Cannon, the more we learn the more confused over your decision we become. At this point, the fact that the cost is minimal seems to be the only positive aspect of the closure. It is hard to understand how closing a fighter wing is a good decision given recent global events and threats to our nation on our home turf. How is it that Cannon's abundant airspace, free of encroachments and impending Supersonic training capability is not valuable to our National defense? In addition to the airspace, the weather in Eastern New Mexico allows for virtually year round flying and training capability. With the Melrose bombing range located so closely to Cannon, it seems to be the ideal location for realistic training of our military pilots. Although Cannon is an Air Force base, it has the room for expansion facilitating joint military training and operations. Each of these factors, valuable on their own, add up to an invaluable military asset.

Finally, my husband and I came to Clovis as military brats, without a real choice. As adults we decided to settle here, open our businesses, and raise our family, because this is a great community. From our military backgrounds, we both understood how it felt to live in places where the military were unwanted. Not only does this community support our military, they have done so for many years in ways that go beyond the normal "hoopla" of support. It gave us even more pride in this community to learn that we acquired and GAVE to the military the airspace with no encroachments, land for additional housing, and land for improvement and expansion. Yes, GAVE to the military! How can this kind of support be overlooked or deemed as not valuable to our Country?

Sincerely,

Lesli & Greg Duffield