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State of New Mexico  
LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

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May 17, 2005

Anthony J. Principi, Chairman  
Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
2521 South Clark St, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Mr. Chairman:

On behalf of the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee I write to ask you and your colleagues on the Base Realignment and Closure Commission to reconsider the Department of Defense recommendation to close Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico. The members of the Legislative Finance Committee believe that your careful consideration of all the facts will lead to a positive change in the final BRAC analysis of Cannon AFB.

Cannon provides excellent military value because it is a modern, cost-effective base with no encroachment and unrestricted airspace. The federal government has invested \$53.4 million in construction projects for Cannon since fiscal 2000 and planes from Cannon can fly 320 days a year because of New Mexico's excellent, clear weather.

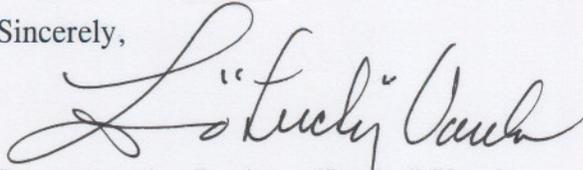
Cannon's host unit, the 27th Fighter Wing, has proposed increasing supersonic flights in eastern New Mexico to provide a supersonic range for the Air Force. This airspace expansion may be approved later this year and may not have been fully considered in the Department of Defense evaluations of Cannon AFB. Further the state of New Mexico has appropriated funds for expansion of the Cannon air space.

New Mexico's obvious advantages in great weather and the nation's best airspace for training the next generation of fighter planes, as well as the strong community support for Cannon

The Honorable Anthony Principi, Chairman, Base Realignment and Closure Commission  
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AFB, should not be discounted in your careful review of this Department of Defense-recommended closure. We urge you to revisit the issue and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lucky Varela". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Representative Luciano "Lucky" Varela  
Chairman

LV:jr/yr

CC: Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. Secretary of Defense  
Bill Richardson, Governor, State of New Mexico  
Pete Domenici, U.S. Senator  
Jeff Bingaman, U.S. Senator  
Tom Udall, U.S. Representative  
Heather Wilson, U.S. Representative  
Steve Pearce, U.S. Representative

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