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May 22, 2005

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

00102005

Dear BRAC Commissioners,

As a retired military wife, I appreciate the difficulty of having to determine specific base closures which you have undertaken, but I would appeal to you to consider why Cannon A.F.B. should be removed from your closure list.

There are a number of reasons why Cannon should remain in operation. Consider the following:

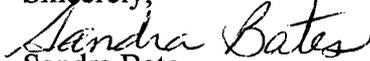
- Many of Cannon's personnel have donated hundreds of volunteer hours to the school where I teach—taking time to read to our children, participate as team leaders during our field day, painting our school, coming in as guest speakers to the classrooms, sharing during Career Day, and providing supplies for students. It has made a great impact on our at-risk students to witness for themselves that there are careers for them to strive toward if they will apply their learning skills. The only positive role-model some of these students have in their lives are the Cannon personnel!
- Cannon provides necessary services to our retired military personnel and their families—services which we will now have to travel hundreds of miles to receive: medical, dental, commissary, BX, etc. Our VA population is particularly hard-hit in this area.
- Access to available unfettered airspace is just a few minutes from the airbase. How many other military bases must fly to other areas to practice bombing and night-flight skills at added expense to the government's budget? Leaders in our community spear-headed the effort to expand and convert the air space to supersonic capability through the New Mexico Training Range Initiative. How many other bases have this capability?
- Consider the relationship between Cannon and its surrounding communities. In the early 90s, Curry County, in conjunction with the state of New Mexico, purchased air easements around Cannon Air Force base and GAVE them to the Air Force. This was done to protect that air space from encroachment and was an important issue for the Air Force. The local community purchased the land north of Cannon Air Force Base and GAVE it back to the Air Force for additional housing, now known as Chavez Manor.
- If our government succeeds in closing Cannon and consolidating its additional bases and military offense around the country, as it has been doing in the past, our citizens run the risk of being under-protected from future terrorist attacks. During an attack, I foresee congestion of roadways to and from the consolidation areas as

people try to meet the challenge at hand. It seems illogical to bring all of our weaponry and defensive might to a few centrally-located areas (as would happen in a consolidation) and leave outlying areas of our country unprotected. Isn't it easier to destroy us as a nation by targeting the most densely populated areas or the areas where most of our defense is located?

- Our local economy will certainly suffer as Cannon civilian personnel, local businesses, and schools are realigned or closed due to the movement out of military personnel. Already, even with just the whisper of a closure, people are reconsidering buying housing, moving to our city, and/or investing here. I have been present at other bases that have closed and it is a very difficult experience.

Thank you for taking the time to read my position on your BRAC closure decision.

Sincerely,



Sandra Bates

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