



# State of New Mexico

*Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

**News Release**

## **Governor Richardson and Congressional Delegation Gear Up For Last Fight BRAC Commission Final Vote On Cannon Air Force Base Expected Next Week**

Governor Richardson says we have a 50/50 chance to keep Cannon Open

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Santa Fe, NM – The outcome of all the hard work of Governor Bill Richardson, New Mexico's Congressional delegation and the community of Clovis will be decided next week as the BRAC Commission is expected to vote on whether to keep Cannon Air Force Base on the list of military bases to be closed by the Department of Defense.

"I want to commend Senator Domenici, Senator Bingaman and Congressman Udall and all of New Mexico's Congressional Representatives for their tireless efforts over the past months to show the military value of Cannon to the Commission," said Governor Richardson. "The one resounding factor that has truly increased our odds to keep Cannon open, has been the unity of the entire state, because everyone has put politics aside as New Mexicans to protect our military bases from closure. Together we presented a strong case to the nine BRAC Commissioners on the military value of Cannon Air Force Base and its importance to the security of our nation and the people of New Mexico," Governor Richardson said.

"I also want to thank the BRAC Commissioners for being open to the facts we presented and for the hard work they have done on behalf of a nation," Governor Richardson said.

"I am glad I was able to meet personally with all the Commissioners. I have talked with many of them by phone this week. In my discussions and the talks held by our

Delegation with the support of people of Clovis, the tens of thousands of letters and emails the Commissioners received, we were able to showcase the strategic military value of Cannon Air Force Base, its air space and bombing range. We have provided the Commissioners with various mission alternatives for Cannon such as the Joint Strike Fighter, and we have shown the capabilities for joint operations with the Army,” said Governor Richardson.

The tentative schedule for the BRAC Commission is to deliberate and vote on the proposed actions on Wednesday, August 24, Thursday, August 25, and Friday, August 26, if needed. A vote of five of the nine commissioners to remove Cannon from the list is needed. The recommendation of the BRAC Commission will then be sent to President Bush by September 8<sup>th</sup>. The President then has the option of forwarding the recommendations to Congress who must act to accept or reject the entire proposal.

Governor Richardson kept his promise he made to the people of Clovis the day after the Pentagon’s decision to close Cannon was announced. He has personally met with all of the BRAC Commissioners. In addition, calls and personal visits have also been made by the Congressional delegation to the Commissioners. The community of Clovis and the state’s team of analysts have continued to provide data analysis to the BRAC staff since the regional hearing in Clovis in June.

The community of Clovis and the State have remained focused on showing their support for Cannon. Last week, the Mayor of Clovis and the Governor’s office announced that land had been identified that could be purchased with assistance from the State that would double the size of Cannon cost-free to the Department of Defense.

“When the announcement was made that Cannon was on the closure list, we knew that this would be an uphill battle and that historically, only 15% of the Pentagon’s decisions were overturned,” said Governor Richardson. “Today, because of everyone’s hard work, we believe that we now have a 50 – 50 chance. It is now in the hands of the BRAC Commission. They have been very open to the facts that we have presented and we respect the hard work of the Commissioners and the BRAC staff as they have reviewed all of the information provided.”

“Let’s hope Cannon stays open. It’s in the national interest. We have done all we can. I am proud of the way the state came together and stayed united,” Governor Bill Richardson said.