THE ROUTE TO CHINA

North American Airlines’ bid for China route deserves isle support

The airline promises routes that stop in Honolulu if it wins the flights next year

By Johnson W.K. Choi

When Singapore Airlines stopped its direct flight service from Hong Kong to Hawaii in 1989, it created great inconveniences for both business and leisure travelers to come to Hawaii.

You can see a drop of Hong Kong visitors, including business executives, visiting Hawaii.

During the past 10 years, trade between United States and China has substantially increased.

Many businesses doing business with China preferred to set up their
offices in California, which has the comfort of many choices of daily
direct flights to and from all major cities in Asia.

During the past few years, we have had discussions with many
accounting firms and found that more Chinese businesses left Hawaii,
especially after 9/11, due to the difficulties traveling to and from Asia
(except Japan).

The required stopovers at one or more connection points is a common
complaint by business travelers.

I have received a solicitation for support from North American
Airlines to fly directly to Shanghai and Guangzhou. I do not know
too much about the airline.

But I've heard about direct flights from Hawaii to China for more
than 10 years with almost annual discussion with foreign carriers
planning to start direct flights from China/Hong Kong to Hawaii.

It has become old news.

We believe an American airline willing to fly to Shanghai and
Guangzhou direct from Hawaii makes more economic sense as
domestic carriers are allowed to pick up and drop off passenger
between U.S. cities (foreign carriers are not allowed to do so).

It is great news that Hawaiian Airlines intends to fly direct to China
from Hawaii in 2006 -- but it is two years away. It is not as desirable
since it planning to do the direct flights four times per week.

If North American Airlines is able to fly daily directly to Shanghai in
2005 and Guangzhou in 2006 it should be good news for Hawaii. It
will also give business travelers better choices and cut down their
travel time to/from Hawaii.

I am asking you to take a look at it and see if you can support their
efforts.

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