

PACIFIC BUSINESS NEWS

LATEST NEWS

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Mayor writes on behalf of North American's Hawaii-China flight bid

Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris has written to Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta in support of direct flights between Honolulu and Shanghai, and a local leader in forging business ties with China urges others to do the same.

"The direct airlink is very critical to business executives who are in Hawaii," said Johnson Choi, executive director of the China-Hawaii Chamber of Commerce.

Flight slots between the United States and China are scarce, and most major mainland carriers are actively lobbying to fly to China from places like Newark, Chicago and Atlanta.

North American Airlines, a relatively new carrier that flies to Honolulu from Oakland, Calif., is requesting permission to fly from Oakland to Shanghai and Guangzhou through Honolulu.

"The service proposed by North American represents a truly unique opportunity for businessmen and women such as me, and one that will benefit travelers from the entire U.S.," Mayor Harris wrote.

Harris notes that North American is a discount carrier with connections to other mainland discount carriers. Most of the other applicants are big legacy carriers.

"If they become successful, we will see direct airlink between Hawaii and Shanghai is just a few months," Choi said. Otherwise, he said, it could take years.

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