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MAYOR EMANUEL MEETS WITH AIRBERLIN TO DISCUSS CONTINUED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEW AIR SERVICE BETWEEN CHICAGO O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND BERLIN, GERMANY

Mayor Emanuel Meets With Leaders of Berlin-based Airline and Tourism Agency to Foster Trans-Atlantic Opportunity

Mayor Rahm Emanuel met Friday with Dr. Hartmut Mehdorn, CEO airberlin group; Paul Gregorowitsch, CCO airberlin group; and Burkhardt Kieker, CEO visitBerlin to discuss opportunities for continued growth and partnership.

In July 2012, Mayor Emanuel announced that airberlin will begin new service between the German capital of Berlin and Chicago-O'Hare on March 23, 2013. The connection will make airberlin the first airline to provide a nonstop route between the two cities. The annual economic activity of this new non-stop airberlin service is anticipated to be approximately \$130 million in the Chicago region. The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) and its partners, World Business Chicago, Choose Chicago, and the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce all supported the recruitment efforts.

"I am pleased to welcome a new airline to Chicago, bringing business and leisure customers while creating jobs and economic opportunity at the airport and throughout the city," said Mayor Emanuel. "New international routes have tremendous benefits to the city's economy. airberlin's service from Chicago to Berlin -- alongside new American Airlines service from Chicago to Dusseldorf starting next April -- will further connect Chicago with Germany, Europe and the rest of the world."

The new route from Chicago to Berlin will increase connectivity, efficiency and productivity for many Chicago businesses, which is home to over 250 German-owned companies. Accenture, Aon, Baker & McKenzie, Boeing, Edelman, Grant Thornton, Groupon, Hyatt, Jones Lang LaSalle, Leo Burnett, Mayer Brown, McDonalds, Motorola Solutions, Murphy/Jahn, Nalco and Rexam are just a few of the 110 Chicago area-based companies that have significant operations in Germany.

In 2011, Chicago welcomed 1,119,000 international visitors to Chicago with 80,000 of those travelers coming from Germany, representing 4.4% share of the country market. Furthering the relationship between the two cities, by December 31, 2012, Choose Chicago will open its 9th international office in Germany. This will bring a positive trend in visitation from the German market.

"airberlin and the United States of America are linked by a long-standing and very close friendship. After all, airberlin was originally founded in 1978 as Air Berlin, Inc., by US pilot Kim Lundgren. The further strengthening of our position in the United States as a result of this new non-stop service between Chicago and Berlin is, therefore, also close to our heart," said Hartmut Mehdorn, CEO of airberlin. "Furthermore, we have revised our entire US route network and next year we will be reinforcing our presence specifically in Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Miami."

Airberlin is Germany's second-largest airline and the sixth-largest European airline by number of passengers carried. It flies to 162 destinations in 40 countries with a fleet of 170 planes. With an average age of five years, airberlin's fleet is one of the newest and most environmentally friendly fleets in Europe. The 303-seat Airbus A330-200 will operate a direct route between Chicago and Berlin three times a week through April 30, 2013 and five times a week beginning May 1, 2013.

During Mayor Emanuel's administration, Chicago-O'Hare has welcomed non-stop service to and from Mexico, Panama, Canada and China leading to over \$330 million in economic activity in the Chicago region.

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Photo Caption: Mayor Rahm Emanuel met with the leaders of airberlin Dr. Hartmut Mehdorn, CEO; Paul Gregorowitsch, CCO; and Burkhardt Kieker, CEO of visitBerlin.

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