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NEWS RELEASE

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GHP LAUDS NON-STOP SERVICE TO BEIJING BUSINESS GROUP JOINS CITY, AIRPORT IN TOUTING GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE

HOUSTON – The Greater Houston Partnership (GHP) is pleased to join with the City of Houston and the Houston Airport System (HAS) in welcoming new, non-stop passenger flight service from Beijing to Houston. The City and HAS held a press conference along with Air China earlier today announcing the flight, which is expected to begin this July.

“GHP celebrates the very strong business and cultural ties that exist between our area and China,” said GHP President and CEO Bob Harvey. “With the addition of non-stop air passenger service from Houston to Beijing, it will open more avenues to aggressively explore trade and investment opportunities for our corporate community. The announcement also broadens the region’s stature as a global business leader.”

More than 840 Houston companies report business or trade ties with China. Of the 545 firms in the Houston region affiliated with Chinese subsidiaries, 51 are *headquartered* in Houston and control 108 subsidiary locations throughout China.

“Since I first came into office, having a direct flight between Houston and Beijing has been a foremost priority,” said Houston Mayor Annise Parker. “After traveling there twice to personally convey Houston’s commitment, today we see our hard work and dedication has paid off. The partnership with Air China will sustain Houston’s reputation as an international gateway and help spur economic development in our region.”

In 2011, total annual trade between Houston and China grew 30.8 percent, from \$9.1 billion in 2010 to \$11.9 billion. That same year, total annual air cargo trade between Houston and China rose 10.5 percent to 13.0 million kilograms and was valued at \$882.9 million.

“The Houston Airport System has a long history with the aviation community in China, but this new partnership is exceptional. With the arrival of Air China, the City of Houston will stand as the sole provider of non-stop air service to mainland China for the entire central and southern regions of the United States,” said Mario Diaz, Director of the Houston Airport System.

GREATER HOUSTON PARTNERSHIP

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Since 2009, GHP has signed 15 MOUs with governmental and business entities including two Chinese provinces and nine cities with a GDP of \$2.2 trillion and a population of 315 million people in Mainland China. It included one MOU signed with China Council of Promotion of International Trade in Beijing last year. The leading business organization also has participated in trade missions led by Houston Mayor Parker, the Houston Airport System and MetroBank Chairman Don Wang, who also serves as vice chair of GHP's World Trade Center and International Investment Committee.

GHP estimates that more than 50 Chinese firms operate 50 subsidiaries in the Houston metro. According to research, Hong Kong firms operate an additional five subsidiaries and Taiwanese firms operate 14 subsidiaries in Houston.

Last year, Cosco, a Chinese container carrier, began service between Houston and China via the Panama Canal.

Also in 2012, many Chinese companies GHP worked with opened new offices or expanded their operations in Houston including: Sinopec (#5 *Fortune Global 500*, with revenue of \$375 billion) and China National Petroleum Corporation (listed as #6 in *Fortune Global 500* with revenue of \$352 billion). Companies that opened offices in Houston last year also included China National Offshore Oil (#10 *Fortune Global 500* with revenue of \$76 billion); Yan Tai Jereh Group, one of the largest oil and equipment manufacturers in China; and Shanghai SK Petroleum Equipment Co, a Chinese public oil equipment company.

The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary business advocate for the 10-county Houston region. The 2100-member organization represents small, mid-sized and *Fortune 500* companies. Its Member companies account for every one in five jobs in the Houston region.

Through its award-winning lead generation and marketing program *Opportunity Houston*, GHP estimates that it will help recruit 600,000 regional jobs; attract \$60 billion in capital investment; and expand foreign trade by \$120 billion by the end of 2015.

Visit www.houston.org for more info on the Greater Houston Partnership.

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The Greater Houston Partnership is the primary advocate of Houston's business community and is dedicated to building regional economic prosperity. It represents 10 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto and Waller. With more than 2,100 Member organizations, GHP represents approximately one-fifth of the region's work force. Visit GHP at houston.org.

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