

MEDIA RELEASE

Gov. Linda Lingle is in China to build on the state's strategic efforts to strengthen Hawaii's economic base by tapping China's growing outbound tourism market as well as developing opportunities and partnerships in clean energy and international trade.

In 2008, Lingle attended the opening ceremony of the China International Travel Mart (CITM), Asia's largest international tourism fair to promote travel to Hawaii.

"There are many issues that are before our state – both fiscal and economic issues – and all of these are critically important, but we can't sit by and muddle through these very difficult times and hope they all go OK. We need to move the ball forward on all fronts," Lingle said. "This is our opportunity to continue to cement relationships for the State of Hawaii with one of the most important countries in the world and the largest market for products and services that exists on the planet."

During the trip, which lasts through Nov. 13, the governor will visit six cities where Hawaii has developed important economic interests: Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Haikou and Sanya in Hainan Province and Guangzhou, Guangdong Province.

Beijing is the capital and political and administrative center of China; Shanghai is the country's economic and business center; Hong Kong continues to be a leading global financial center and trading base; both Hainan and Guangdong Province are sister-states to Hawaii.

Lingle, Ted Liu, director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism and Hawaii tourism leaders promoted Hawaii tourism in China during the governor's visit in November 2008.

China's emerging outbound visitor market

A major part of the governor's trip will be to ensure Hawaii is prepared to maximize economic opportunities from China's emerging outbound tourism market.

Over the past several years, the Lingle-Aiona Administration has focused on strengthening partnerships with the growing Chinese tourism industry as part of a strategic effort to diversify the geographic mix of visitors to Hawaii.

This is particularly important now, as Hawaii is expected to benefit from an increase in Chinese travelers due to recent developments, including the first scheduled direct air service between China and Hawaii, which is expected to start early next year.

Lingle will meet with officials from Hainan Airlines, which recently received approval from the U.S. Department of Transportation to begin the weekly service from Beijing to Honolulu.

Another major tourism-related issue that will be addressed during the trip is expediting the visa application and approval process for Chinese visitors to the United States.

Hawaii-China clean energy partnerships

During her meeting with U.S. Ambassador Jon Huntsman, the Governor will expand on earlier conversations she had with him on the role Hawaii can play in fostering partnerships and investments, as the U.S. and China work toward reducing dependence on fossil fuels and developing clean, renewable energy alternatives.

She will also meet with key Chinese government and business leaders to focus on opportunities for Hawaii in the area of clean energy development and environmental protection.

Promoting Hawaii exports

In Beijing, the governor will meet with the China Ministry of Commerce (MOC), the nation's top trade and economic development agency.

In an attempt to narrow China's trade surplus with the U.S., the MOC is launching a program to promote American products to the Chinese consumer, especially the growing Chinese middle class.

Lingle will discuss the MOC's interest in launching a Hawaii products showroom and trade center, fully funded and operated by the MOC, that will promote and distribute Hawaii products in China.

In Shanghai, Lingle will meet with the organizers of the Shanghai Expo, a six-month international exhibition to be held May to September of 2010. The organizers expect 70 million people to visit the Shanghai Expo, of which 67 million will be Chinese domestic visitors.

Lingle will explore utilizing the expo as a platform for promoting the export of Hawaii products and services.

Strengthening partnerships in the global economy

The Hainan Province and Guangdong Province portions of the trip will focus on strengthening existing relationships with Hawaii's historic sister-states in China.

Sister-states are the internationally accepted formal basis upon which closer economic, business and cultural exchange between two foreign states are promoted.

At the invitation of Guangdong Province Governor Huang Huahua, Governor Lingle will travel to Guangzhou to celebrate the 30th anniversary of Guangdong Province's sister relations program, where she will address foreign officials from Guangdong's sister provinces/states.

She will also become the first governor from Hawaii to visit Hainan Province, which has shared a sister-state/province relationship with Hawaii since 1992.

Leaders from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii will join Lingle in Hainan and Guangdong Provinces as partners in promoting business, trade and other economic and cultural exchanges between Hawaii and China.

Travel expenses

Lingle's air travel expenses will be paid for with state funds. Liu's air fare will be funded by DBEDT.

The Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Hainan Provincial Government and Guangdong Provincial Government will pay for hotel accommodations and ground transportation in Beijing, Shanghai, Hainan and Guangzhou. Expenses in Hong Kong will be paid for with personal funds.

LINGLE'S PUBLIC SCHEDULE

MONDAY, NOV. 2 – Beijing

Lingle will address Chinese tourism officials, tour wholesalers, travel agents, airline executives and travel writers to encourage Chinese travel to Hawaii.

The increased tourism outreach comes as Hawaii prepares for the first scheduled non-stop airline service between Hawaii and China, which is expected to start early next year.

Lingle; Liu Kelvin Bloom, chair of the Hawaii Tourism Authority; and Hawaii Tourism China will participate in a media roundtable with Chinese travel and leisure writers and news journalists to promote Hawaii as a travel destination.

The governor will build on her recent meeting in Honolulu with Jon Huntsman, U.S. Ambassador to China, to discuss expediting the U.S. visa application process for Chinese visitors to the United States. (Ambassador Huntsman worked closely with Governor Lingle when he was Governor of Utah.)

She will also discuss how the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative can serve as a model as the U.S. and China work to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and developing renewable energy alternatives.

Lingle will meet with Shao Qiwei, chairman of the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), the country's tourism ministry, to build on the progress made since Hawaii and the CNTA formed a cooperative agreement following the governor's first business trip to China in 2005 to increase two-way travel between Hawaii and China. (Lingle's most recent meeting with Chairman Shao took place last month at Washington Place as a precursor to their meeting in Beijing.)

TUESDAY, NOV. 3 – Beijing

Lingle and Liu will meet with officials of the China Academy of Engineering who are experts in the clean energy sector. The officials spoke at the Asia-Pacific Clean Energy Summit and Expo that was held in Hawaii in September, and plan to participate in the 2010 summit in Hawaii.

The meeting will also include officials of China's National Development and Reform Commission, which has broad administrative and planning control over the Chinese economy, including formulating policies for economic and social development, restructuring China's economic system and guiding private investment.

Lingle will deliver remarks at a luncheon hosted by the China Academy of Engineering and the Chinese Peoples Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC).

Lingle and Liu will meet with the Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) office of China Import Product Solicitation and Promotion System to discuss the 'Hawaii House' program MOFCOM is launching to promote Hawaii products to Chinese consumers.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 4 – Depart Beijing for Shanghai.

THURSDAY, NOV. 5 – Shanghai

Governor Lingle will address Chinese tourism officials, tour wholesalers, travel agents, airline executives and travel writers to encourage Chinese travel to Hawaii.

The increased tourism outreach comes as Hawaii prepares for the first scheduled non-stop airline service between Hawaii and China which is expected to start early next year.

Lingle, Bloom, Liu and Hawaii Tourism China will participate in a media roundtable.

FRIDAY, NOV. 6 – Depart Shanghai for Hong Kong.

The governor will meet with Hong Kong officials to discuss investment and partnership opportunities for Hawaii in the area of clean energy and environmental protection.

The officials include:

* Edward Yao, Secretary for the Environment

* Rita Lau, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development

* Helen Chan, Government Economist, Financial Secretary's Office

Lingle will deliver remarks to Hong Kong business executives on business and investment opportunities and partnerships between Hawaii and Hong Kong. The event will be hosted by Daniel Fung, former Hong Kong Solicitor General and current member of the Board of Governors of the East-West Center.

SATURDAY, NOV. 7 – Hong Kong

Lingle and Liu will tour the Hong Kong Monetary Authority Information Center, arranged by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office.

SUNDAY, NOV. 8 – Depart Hong Kong for Haikou, Hainan

MONDAY, NOV. 9 – Haikou, Hainan Province

Lingle; Liu; Office of Planning Executive Director Abbey Mayer; and Tina Yao, Hawaii Tourism China will meet with Chen Feng, chairman of the board of Hainan Airlines, to discuss the first scheduled nonstop airline service between China and Hawaii, which is expected to start next year.

Lingle, Liu, Mayer and leaders of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii will meet with Hainan Province Gov. Luo Baoming to discuss expanding partnerships under the Hawaii-Hainan Sister-State/Province Relationship that was first established in 1992. Lingle is the first Hawaii governor to visit Hainan.

The Governor, Liu, Mayer and leaders of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce will meet with officials of the Hainan National Development and Reform Commission to discuss clean energy partnerships and investments between Hawaii and Hainan.

Lingle, Liu and Mayer will attend an event hosted by Hugo Xiong, global executive vice president of IDG Venture Capital, a global network of venture capital funds.

TUESDAY, NOV. 10 – Travel from Haikou to Sanya.

The governor will visit the resort city of Sanya on Hainan Island.

Lingle, Liu, Mayer and leaders of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii will meet with Wang Yong, mayor of Sanya to discuss Hawaii-Sanya tourism partnerships as well as increasing two-way travel between Hawaii and China.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 11 – Depart Sanya for Guangzhou, Guangdong.

Lingle, Liu and leaders of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii will meet with Huang Huahua, governor of Guangdong Province to discuss strengthening partnerships between Hawaii and Guangdong in the areas of economic development, tourism, and clean energy, as well as cultural and educational exchanges.

The two governors met in Guangzhou in June 2005 to mark the 20th anniversary of the Hawaii-Guangdong sister-state/province agreement and to sign a reaffirmation agreement. They also met later that year, when Governor Huang led a delegation to Hawaii.

Lingle, Liu, Mayer, Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii members and world leaders will attend the opening ceremony and welcome reception in celebration of Guangdong's 30th anniversary of Guangdong Province's sister-state/city/province relationships.

THURSDAY, NOV. 12 – Guangzhou, Guangdong Province

Lingle will participate in discussions with world leaders gathered in Guangdong for a full-day conference in celebration of the 30th anniversary of Guangdong Province's sister-state/city/province relationships.

FRIDAY, NOV. 13 – Guangzhou, Guangdong Province

Lingle will participate in the opening of the School of Research at the Guangzhou University of Foreign Language Studies.

Lingle will deliver a keynote address at a forum on innovation to explore how other nations are developing innovation-based economies and the potential opportunities for Hawaii.

One of Lingle's top priorities for Hawaii is to create an innovation-based economy, including attracting international investments in new technologies.

Lingle, Liu and Mayer will attend a luncheon hosted by Vice Governor Wan Qingliang.

Depart Guangzhou for Honolulu.