

# *U.S. Business Leaders Rushing to Cuba, Notes Major U.S. Daily*

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Havana, March 26 (RHC)—There is a rush of American business leaders who see dollar signs in the warming of U.S.-Cuba relations, writes the U.S. daily The Los Angeles Times.

As the U.S. eases its commerce and travel restrictions in Cuba — with President Obama calling for an end to the embargo— hundreds of airlines, hotel chains, telecommunication firms and other companies are jostling for a piece of the action, says the daily in an article.

Thirteen U.S. airlines have applied for permission from the Department of Transportation to provide direct flights to Havana, and that the Connecticut-based Starwood Hotels and Resorts recently announced a contract to manage several hotels in Cuba. Carnival is already selling tickets for cruises that will dock in Cuban ports later this year, and Google is expected to announce plans to expand Internet access in Cuba, says the daily, which notes that making the rounds in Havana this week were the chief executives of PayPal, which could launch an online remittance service in Cuba, and Airbnb,

already offering 4,000 rental properties on the island.

“Cuba is a very romantic and sexy market right now,” said Alana Tummino, director of policy at Council of the Americas, a U.S. business organization that promotes open markets in Latin America and which recently cohosted a party for executives interested in doing business in Cuba.

But for all the excitement, writes the Los Angeles Times, significant hurdles remain, the biggest one being the U.S. trade blockade against Cuba.

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