

# *Port Canaveral Focuses on Cuba for Cruises, Trade*

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Miami, January 24, (RHC) – Port Canaveral officials are starting to focus on Cuba as a future market for both cargo and cruise business, FloridaToday reports.

Three port representatives will be part of a group of about 50 local residents visiting Cuba next month as part of an educational tour organized by Chamber Explorations, a California-based organization.

While the port officials can't make business deals under current trade restrictions with Cuba, there's no saying they can't tell the people they visit in Cuba about the port and the Space Coast, according to Canaveral Port Authority Chairman Jerry Allender, who is among those going on the trip.

"We'll be doing whatever we can to try to represent Port Canaveral," Allender said. "There's great potential for Port Canaveral for doing business in the future" in Cuba, considering President Obama's support for easing trade and travel restrictions involving Cuba.

Currently, only food and humanitarian aid can be shipped from the United States to Cuba, as exceptions to the US economic blockade on the island, and Port Canaveral is not involved in those shipments.

Port Canaveral Chief Executive Officer John Walsh said cruise lines are always looking for new ports of call to offer their frequent customers. He said Cuba has three potential cruise locations that could provide

cruisers with three different experiences — if cruise lines are allowed to stop there.

"It's a beautiful island," Walsh said. "For us and the cruise lines, it would be phenomenal."

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