

September 27, 2012

Honorable Thomas Petri  
Chairman  
U.S. House Subcommittee on Aviation  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Petri:

My name is Dennis P. Zine and I have been honored to have served as a Los Angeles City Councilman representing the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council District (San Fernando Valley) for the past 11+ years.

Prior to my service on the Los Angeles City Council, I worked for 33 years as a proud member of the Los Angeles Police Department. I am a lifelong Angeleno and consider myself to be intimately familiar with the people and communities and I have seen the enormous changes, not only in the City, but throughout the region over the past several decades.

In addition to my service on the Los Angeles City Council, I have served on the Board of Directors for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), the San Fernando Valley Council of Governments (SFV-COG), the Independent Cities Association (ICA), the National League of Cities, and other local, state, and federal decision-making bodies.

As an elected official in the City of Los Angeles, you quickly realize that the decisions made throughout the entire region have a direct impact on the quality of life for residents in the City of Los Angeles.

Mr. Chairman, you and the honorable members of the House Subcommittee on Aviation already know the history of Ontario International Airport in addition to the

current governance structure, so I won't take your time to rehash that information.

My message to you today is to offer you my insight as a member of the Los Angeles City Council and my firsthand experiences and observations of the current situation at Ontario Airport.

The Greater Los Angeles area is reliant upon a system of commercial airports for travel to and from the region. These airports include Los Angeles International Airport, Burbank Airport, Long Beach Airport, John Wayne/Orange County Airport, and of course Ontario International Airport.

In order to provide the best service possible to all of the residents of our region and to the traveling public, it is essential that all five of these Airports provide quality service, competitive prices, and ample availability of flights to and from the region.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case.

**Since 2007, the total number of annual passengers at Ontario Airport has declined by 37%.**

This decline has driven more and more passengers to other airports, most notably Los Angeles International, and led to increased congestion on our roads and an absolute lack of productivity for travelers who sometimes have to drive for hours on Southern California freeways just to take a simple flight to Northern California. This should not be the case.

Last year, I made an unannounced personal visit to Ontario Airport so that I could see things firsthand. What I saw was disappointing.

I saw a beautiful, modern airport with a complete terminal closed due to lack of flights. I saw approximately half of all of the concession stands closed down and out of business – including a popular name brand coffee shop – shortly after noon on a Tuesday.

During my visit, I also made an unannounced stop at the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) executive offices at Ontario Airport to speak with the onsite manager. I was shocked to learn that the onsite manager was not in fact onsite and that there, at the time at least, was actually a system of shared management where two individuals served as general managers for both Ontario Airport and Van Nuys Airport on a rotating basis.

I am a strong believer in local control and the consumer benefits of regional competition. Local officials and stakeholders have a greater incentive to promote and operate Ontario Airport with maximum efficiency. As Ontario Airport grows,

the local economy grows and traffic is relieved on Southern California roads and highways. It is astonishing to me and completely counterintuitive that as the population in the Inland Empire region has continued to grow, the service and availability of flights at Ontario Airport has continued to decline.

I prepared my written remarks on Friday, September 21. As I prepared my remarks I decided to go online to Southwest Airlines to search for flights to Sacramento on Monday, September 24 from both Los Angeles International and Ontario Airports. I chose the destination (Sacramento) and dates completely at random.

Southwest Airlines offered "Wanna Get Away" rates of \$141 for 8 different departing flights from LAX to Sacramento on Monday, September 24 and 8 different return flights also with rates of \$141 from Sacramento to LAX the following day, September 25.

However, Southwest Airlines offered no flights at the "Wanna Get Away" rates to or from Ontario to Sacramento for these same dates.

At the next two fare levels, the "Anytime" and "Business Select" rates, Southwest Airlines rates are \$9.00 higher from Ontario at the "Anytime" level and the "Business Select" level across the board when compared to LAX.

The bottom line is that a traveler from the Inland Empire can travel roundtrip from LAX to Sacramento for \$136 cheaper than they can from Ontario on the same days, from the same airline. This naturally creates a tremendous incentive for these passengers to needlessly add to the congestion on our freeways for a one hour flight that they should be able to take right in their own backyard.

I realize that private airlines set the rates for their flights and local airports only have a certain amount of influence over these rates and flight schedules. My point, however, remains valid that the current situation is simply not working.

I have attached a copy of both of the online pricing charts that I obtained from southwest.com for these flight comparisons.

Any deal involving the transferring of Ontario Airport back to local control must ensure that the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles World Airports not be held liable for any and all bond indebtedness related to the Airport. If we can come to an agreement that does not harm our City or LAWA and includes fair compensation for the actual value of the Airport, then my message to you is simple and straightforward. I join the Los Angeles Times, the Southern California Association of Governments, community groups throughout the City of Los Angeles, and many others in saying loud and clear that it is time to Set Ontario Free.

In conclusion, I want to thank you Mr. Chairman and the members of the committee for taking the time to carefully consider this matter. A vibrant Ontario Airport is critical not just for residents of Ontario and the Inland Empire – but for the entire region including the City of Los Angeles. I believe that local control of Ontario Airport, made under the right circumstances that does not harm the City of Los Angeles or the Los Angeles World Airports, is an important first step in re-establishing this Airport as an economic engine in the Inland Empire and provide positive benefits to our entire region.

Thank you once again for your time.

Sincerely,

DENNIS P. ZINE  
Los Angeles City Councilman, Third District



SOUTHWEST.COM

## Select Departing Flight: Ontario/LA, CA to Sacramento, CA

Modify Search  Round Trip  One-Way

Additional Search Options

From:  To:

Add another flight

First 2 Bags Fly Free®. Weight, size & excess limits apply. | Gov't taxes & fees now included

SEP 19 WED	SEP 20 THU	SEP 21 FRI	SEP 22 SAT	SEP 23 SUN	<b>SEP 24 MON</b>	SEP 25 TUE	SEP 26 WED	SEP 27 THU	SEP 28 FRI	SEP 29 SAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try our Low Fare Calendar Quickly find our lowest fares
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	-------------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	--

All fares are rounded up to the nearest dollar.

Depart	Arrive	Flight # (% on-time)	Routing	Travel Time (hrs:m)	Business Select \$225	Anytime \$209	Wanna Get Away
6:00 AM	7:20 AM	483	Nonstop	1:20	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
7:50 AM	9:10 AM	837	Nonstop	1:20	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
10:00 AM	11:15 AM	395	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
12:30 PM	1:45 PM	444	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
4:15 PM	5:30 PM	1562	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
6:20 PM	7:35 PM	690	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
8:40 PM	9:55 PM	943	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	

## Select Returning Flight: Sacramento, CA to Ontario/LA, CA

First 2 Bags Fly Free®. Weight, size & excess limits apply. | Gov't taxes & fees now included

SEP 20 THU	SEP 21 FRI	SEP 22 SAT	SEP 23 SUN	SEP 24 MON	<b>SEP 25 TUE</b>	SEP 26 WED	SEP 27 THU	SEP 28 FRI	SEP 29 SAT	SEP 30 SUN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try our Low Fare Calendar Quickly find our lowest fares
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	-------------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	--

All fares are rounded up to the nearest dollar.

Depart	Arrive	Flight # (% on-time)	Routing	Travel Time (hrs:m)	Business Select \$225	Anytime \$209	Wanna Get Away
6:45 AM	8:00 AM	806	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
8:50 AM	10:05 AM	497	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
11:45 AM	1:00 PM	258	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
2:25 PM	3:40 PM	1473	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
6:20 PM	7:35 PM	850	Nonstop	1:15	Sold Out	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	
7:50 PM	9:05 PM	1919	Nonstop	1:15	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$225	<input checked="" type="radio"/> \$209	

9:30 PM	10:45 PM	657	Nonstop	1:15	\$225	\$209
---------	----------	-----	---------	------	-------	-------

Price selected flight(s)

Continue

**Important Fare & Schedule Information**

All fares and fare ranges are subject to change until purchased.

Flight on-time performance statistics can be viewed by clicking on the individual flight numbers.

All fares and fare ranges listed are per person for each way of travel.

"Unavailable" indicates the corresponding fare is unavailable for the selected travel date(s). The search did not meet certain fare

**BUSINESS SELECT**<sup>®</sup> Priority Boarding group A1-15 | 2,568 Rapid Rewards<sup>®</sup> Points | Fly By<sup>®</sup> Priority Lane | Premium Drink (day of travel) | Same-Day Changes | Fully Refundable

These itineraries may become valid options if you search with a different depart or return date and/or for a one-way flight instead.

"Travel Time" represents the total elapsed time for your trip from your departure city to your final destination including stops, layovers, and time zone changes.

For infant, child (2-11), group (10+), and military fares please call 1-800-I-FLY-SWA (1-800-435-9792). These fares are a discount off the "Anytime" fares. Other fares may be lower.

\*Save \$250 with Flight + Hotel<sup>™</sup> claim is based on 2011 available data for average savings on Jackpot bookings purchased in a bundled package vs purchasing components separately (i.e. a la carte). Savings on any given package will vary based on the selected origin, destination, travel dates, hotel property, length of stay, car rental, and activity tickets. Savings may not be available on all packages.



# Select Departing Flight: Los Angeles, CA to Sacramento, CA

Modify Search  Round Trip  One-Way

Additional Search Options

From:  To:

Add another flight

First 2 Bags Fly Free®. Weight, size & excess limits apply. | Gov't taxes & fees now included

SEP 19 WED	SEP 20 THU	SEP 21 FRI	SEP 22 SAT	SEP 23 SUN	<b>SEP 24 MON</b>	SEP 25 TUE	SEP 26 WED	SEP 27 THU	SEP 28 FRI	SEP 29 SAT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try our Low Fare Calendar Quickly find our lowest fares
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	-------------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	--

All fares are rounded up to the nearest dollar.

Depart	Arrive	Flight # (% online)	Routing	Travel Time (h:mm)	Business Select \$216	Anytime \$200	Wanna Get Away \$141
625 AM	740 AM	3139	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
850 AM	1010 AM	115	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141
1140 AM	1255 PM	2883	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
235 PM	350 PM	488	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
500 PM	616 PM	3588	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
715 PM	830 PM	393	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
830 PM	945 PM	2945	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141
940 PM	1055 PM	3854	Nonstop	1:15	\$216	\$200	\$141

# Select Returning Flight: Sacramento, CA to Los Angeles, CA

First 2 Bags Fly Free®. Weight, size & excess limits apply. | Gov't taxes & fees now included

SEP 20 THU	SEP 21 FRI	SEP 22 SAT	SEP 23 SUN	SEP 24 MON	<b>SEP 25 TUE</b>	SEP 26 WED	SEP 27 THU	SEP 28 FRI	SEP 29 SAT	SEP 30 SUN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Try our Low Fare Calendar Quickly find our lowest fares
------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	-------------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------	--

All fares are rounded up to the nearest dollar.

Depart	Arrive	Flight # (% online)	Routing	Travel Time (h:mm)	Business Select \$216	Anytime \$200	Wanna Get Away \$141
635 AM	800 AM	3343	Nonstop	1:25	\$216	\$200	\$141
705 AM	830 AM	3699	Nonstop	1:25	\$216	\$200	\$141
905 AM	1025 AM	1110	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141
1135 AM	1255 PM	1031	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141
230 PM	350 PM	490	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141

5:10 PM	8:30 PM	637	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141
7:20 PM	8:50 PM	248	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141
9:55 PM	11:15 PM	780	Nonstop	1:20	\$216	\$200	\$141

Price selected flight(s)

Continue

**Important Fare & Schedule Information**

All fares and fare ranges are subject to change until purchased.

Flight ontime performance statistics can be viewed by clicking on the individual flight numbers.

All fares and fare ranges listed are per person for each way of travel.

"Unavailable" indicates the corresponding fare is unavailable for the selected travel date(s), the search did not meet certain fare requirements, or the flight has already departed.

"Sold Out" indicates that flight is sold out for the corresponding fare type.

"Invalid w / Depart or Return Dates" indicates that our system cannot return a valid itinerary option(s) with the search criteria submitted. This can occur when flights are sold out in one direction of a roundtrip search or with a same-day roundtrip search.

These itineraries may become valid options if you search with a different depart or return date and/or for a one way flight instead.

"Travel Time" represents the total elapsed time for your trip from your departure city to your final destination including stops, layovers, and time zone changes.

For infant, child (2-11), group (10+), and military fares please call 1-800-I-FLY-SWA (1-800-435-9792). These fares are a discount off the "Anytime" fares. Other fares may be lower.

\*"Save \$250 with Flight + Hotel" claim is based on 2011 available data for average savings on Jackpot bookings purchased in a bundled package vs purchasing components separately (i.e. a la carte). Savings on any given package will vary based on the selected origin, destination, travel dates, hotel property, length of stay, car rental, and activity tickets. Savings may not be available on all packages.