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## **Southwest Airlines Exploring Opportunity to Add 737-800 to Fleet; Decision Not Finalized**

DALLAS, Aug. 13 /PRNewswire/ -- Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer Mike Van de Ven sent a message to Southwest Employees today that the airline has been evaluating the opportunity to introduce the Boeing 737-800 into its fleet as part of its domestic network. The airline would like to reach a final decision on adding the -800 before the end of the year.

"While the aircraft could introduce additional complexities to our operation, we believe our existing network could be significantly enhanced by converting some of our future 737-700 deliveries to 737-800s. Introducing the -800, which has more seating capacity than the -700, would be a complementary fit to our current fleet by supplementing opportunities for longer-haul flying, while also potentially improving our unit costs. The -800 also can give Southwest scheduling flexibility by allowing for additional capacity in high-demand, slot-controlled, or gate-restricted markets. We are proud to continue our strong history of being the largest 737 operator in the world and excited for the potential opportunities that could come with introducing the -800 into our fleet," Van de Ven said.

At this point, the decision to add the -800 has not been finalized, so any details regarding configuration, timing, and quantity of deliveries are still to be determined. Next steps in evaluating the -800 opportunity include entering into discussions with Southwest's labor unions, assessing network flow, determining aircraft configuration, evaluating scheduling needs, completing regulatory work, and finalizing other considerations.

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SOURCE Southwest Airlines