

Sununu's Week on the Move, Ends With Entourage in Cabo Verde

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Gov. Sununu spoke at the Cato Institute and posted this photo on Twitter Feb. 2 saying, “Hundreds turned out in Naples, FL, today to hear how New Hampshire is RANKED THE #1 FREEST STATE IN AMERICA! Thanks to [@CatoInstitute](#) for inviting me down to the Sunshine State to share the success of Live Free or Die NH — it was great to meet so many freedom loving Floridians!”

BOW – Gov. Chris Sununu was 3,416 miles from Concord Friday at Pedro Gomes High School in the Republic of Cabo Verde, a nation of 10 islands off the coast of Africa’s Senegal, to connect students there with students at Bow High School.

Starting last weekend, Sununu was also on the move to Washington D.C. and Florida.

It was the first tangible exchange in a new partnership between the Granite State and Cabo Verde that the governor said hopes will provide opportunities for the next 50 years.

The native language in Cabo Verde is Portuguese but the students are taking English classes. The students got a chance to ask each other in English what they do for fun, what courses they can take at their school, and what their climate is like.

The students there said they enjoy going to the beach and cinema and exploring the islands which have mountains. In snow-bound New Hampshire, Bow students were not in a single classroom but at their homes linked by Zoom.

The two groups also got to hear from Olympic long-distance runner Ruben Sanca, a native Cape Verdean whose family emigrated to Boston when he was young and allowed him to have dual citizenship. He now lives in Newbury, Mass. near the border of New Hampshire at Seabrook.

Sanca said perhaps the most important part of the partnership might be the educational exchange.

Pedro Gomes High School has almost 2,000 students and they have a mascot, the Sharks. Bow is known as the Falcons with fewer than 700 students.

Sporting gifts and uniforms from Bow were offered as gifts along with a letter from the students which the governor read noting the school has a strong academic achievement and that the students are preparing for a future as “skilled, knowledgeable and lifelong learners.”

On Wednesday, Sununu, New Hampshire National Guard Adjutant General David Mikolaities, Department of Business and Economic Affairs Commissioner Taylor Caswell, and soldiers from New Hampshire’s National Guard traveled to the Republic of Cabo Verde for a signing ceremony to officially establish a State Partnership under the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program.

They spent part of Thursday and Friday touring one of the islands, and Sununu said he really enjoyed their music.

The SPP between the New Hampshire National Guard and the Republic of Cabo Verde was announced in October after a months-long, highly competitive selection process involving several other states, according to the governor’s office.

The trip was to include a meeting with José Maria Neves, President of the Republic of Cabo Verde and he was greeted at the airport by United States Ambassador to The Republic of Cabo Verde Jeff Daigle.

During their stay, Sununu and Caswell were to give a presentation to Cabo Verde officials to highlight the “New Hampshire Advantage” and future prospects for business, educational, and cultural partnerships with the state.

“We are safer as a state and country with strategic partnerships across the globe,” said Sununu. “Not only will this mission strengthen military partnerships between our two governments, but it will forge connections between our citizens, sharing and promoting our cultures, values, and experiences.”

The SPP program began 28 years ago as an initiative to assist countries emerging from behind the Iron Curtain and now involves 83, or one-third of the world’s countries, and the National Guard of every U.S. state and territory.

Most of the earliest SPP countries in Europe have become U.S. allies in NATO. Many credit their National Guard state partners with helping make that possible.

Located off the continent of Africa, Cabo Verde, is a seven-hour flight from Boston. It represents New Hampshire’s second state partnership country.

Since 2000, the NH National Guard and El Salvador have forged one of the program’s most enduring and successful alliances.

“We have the experience and knowledge to build a strong partnership with Cabo Verde,” said NH Adjutant Gen. David Mikolaities. “Beyond the shared benefits for Cabo Verde and New Hampshire, we have an opportunity to play a strategic role helping to maintain stability in the region.”

Sununu noted he would like to bring a large plane full of snow for the students to enjoy but the more likely part of the exchange will be to allow students to get to know each other and possibly visit each other’s schools.

The governor’s trip away from the state began last weekend. The governor is due to return to New Hampshire early Saturday morning.

The delegation traveled on a New Hampshire National Guard KC-46 refueler.

Cabo Verde declared its independence from Portugal on July 5, 1975. It has a population of almost half a million, it consists of ten volcanic islands with a combined land area of about 1,557 square miles.

Since the early 1990s, Cape Verde has been a stable representative democracy and has remained one of the most developed and democratic countries in Africa. Its economy, like New Hampshire, is built largely on tourism.

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He left to attend the Republican Governor's winter gathering in Washington, went to the White House Monday with those other governors, and also flew to Florida to attend an event on behalf of the Cato Institute.

"At no point during this trip will Governor Sununu be unavailable to act in his official capacity as Governor," the press releases detailing the governor's trip read and it also noted no taxpayer funds were used to pay for travel.

"This trip will be fully reimbursed by the Federal Government through the Department of Defense," it read.