

Massachusetts law ensures Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey's connection to New Bedford

"On Saturday, December 17th, the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey's long-awaited homecoming will be celebrated with state officials, generous philanthropists, volunteers, members of the public, and the Prime Minister of Cape Verde, His Excellency Jose Ulisses de Pina Correia e Silva. The speaking program will take place at New Bedford State Pier starting at 10am.

Significant state support was secured by Senator Mark Montigny in addition to special legislation he filed that ensures the Commonwealth's official vessel will be cared for by the Massachusetts Maritime Academy. An Act to preserve the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey permitted the Commonwealth to receive significant funding from private philanthropy, saving taxpayers millions of dollars in renovation costs. The law, drafted and filed by Montigny in the Senate and co-sponsored and led by Cabral in the House, also honors the strong ties between the historic vessel and local Cape Verdean community while ensuring New Bedford remains her official homeport. Massachusetts Maritime Academy will dock the Ernestina-Morrissey at New Bedford State Pier, where she can be made available for educational programming and cultural events such as the annual Cape Verdean Recognition Week.

"The Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey is a treasured gift from the people of Cape Verde that reflects the strong, enduring bond between our nations," said Senator Mark Montigny, who has long-supported capital and operating needs for the Ernestina-Morrissey and successfully led legislation to secure her

restoration. "It is almost hard to believe that after decades of securing millions of state dollars in earmarks and legislation, she is finally back home in New Bedford, fully restored and ready to navigate the open seas. Our law forever protects this historic vessel and her Cape Verdean heritage, and New Bedford is proudly displayed on her stern. This is a special day for our community and the Commonwealth, and I look forward to the day when the Schooner Ernestina-Morrissey can set sail for beautiful Cape Verde."

Public tours of the historic vessel will also be available on Saturday, December 17th from 2 to 4pm as well as on Sunday, December 18th from 11am to 1pm. Anyone wishing to attend the speaking program is encouraged to register with the Massachusetts Maritime Academy:
<https://givebutter.com/ernestina>."