

## Patients ready to go — but where?

Staff shortages limit openings at nursing homes, rehabs

By Felice J. Freyer, Adam Piore, and Travis Andersen  
GLOBE STAFF

Hospitals in Eastern Massachusetts are experiencing extreme levels of gridlock, with ever larger numbers of patients who are ready to be discharged stuck in inpatient wards because there are no openings at nursing homes and rehabilitation centers.

In the latest sign of a worsening, though not unprecedented, situation, the state Department of Public Health last week designated hospitals in Greater Boston and north of the city as “Tier 3.” That now brings all of Eastern Massachusetts into Tier 3, following a similar designation a year ago for Southeastern Massachusetts and Cape Cod after a fire shut Brockton Hospital.

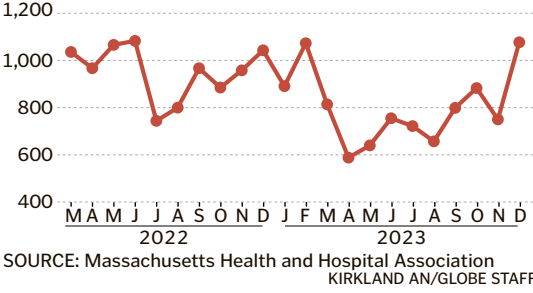
A Tier 3 designation, under a pandemic-era system, alerts

hospitals to a “high risk” of capacity problems; it requires them to meet more frequently with health officials, and to more closely coordinate patient transfers to balance the load among the hospitals.

“Importantly, this change will not result in service reductions,” said a health department spokesperson. “We continue to work closely with our hospital

### Patients waiting for hospital discharge to post-acute setting

Number of patients as reported by Massachusetts hospitals responding to a survey



## Healey nominates ex-partner to SJC seat

Governor says Wolohojian is the most qualified

By Matt Stout  
GLOBE STAFF

Governor Maura Healey on Wednesday nominated Gabrielle R. Wolohojian, a state appellate judge and the governor’s former long-time romantic partner, to an open seat on the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, turning to a deeply experienced jurist with whom she shares a long personal history.

Wolohojian, a judicial appointee of former governor Deval Patrick, has served 16 years on the state Appeals Court, where Healey administration officials said she has authored 900 decisions and presided over roughly 2,700 cases.

Her selection drew praise from within the legal community, where she was described as a seasoned judge acutely attuned to making the state courts more accessible to the public. Legal observers also acknowledged her nomination is unusual, given there’s little, if any, precedent of a recent governor turning to a former romantic partner for such a high-profile court post.

The connection drew quick condemnation from Massachusetts Republican leaders, who called Healey’s decision “highly inappropriate” in light of her and Wolohojian’s 12-year relationship.



**Gabrielle R. Wolohojian** has served on the Appeals Court for 16 years.

## Hundreds run from R.I. home for children

St. Mary’s fixes aren’t nearly enough, critics say

By Amanda Milkovits  
GLOBE STAFF

NORTH PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Andrew Marsalli still thinks about the boy with cuts and bruises who showed up at his door asking for help.

“The boy would say, ‘Please don’t let me go with them. Don’t let them find me,’” Marsalli said. “He would just come knock on my door to talk. But . . . they would know where to find him.”

The home Marsalli shares with his partner, Ken Richey, and their daughter is next to St. Mary’s Home for Children, a residential psychiatric treatment center, with a residential and day school for children with learning, emotional, and behavioral challenges, and outpatient services for children, adults, and families impacted by sexual abuse and exploitation.

In the years they’ve lived there, Marsalli, Richey, and other neighbors said, they’ve often heard children screaming and seen the flashing lights of police and ambulance vehicles at St. Mary’s.

The North Providence police were called to



PHOTOS BY JOHN TLUMACKI/GLOBE STAFF

At Trade Roots, a Wareham cannabis company, workers face strict rules. It’s a different story for makers of hemp-derived products.

## LOOPHOLES PUT A DANGEROUS HIGH IN TEENS’ HANDS



Primabee Premium CBD in Chatham sells gummies that contain CBD and THC delta-9.

Unlike highly regulated cannabis, hemp-based delta-8 is in a legal gray area

By Adam Piore  
GLOBE STAFF

It’s Catherine Dhingra’s job to worry about the youth of Wakefield. So in late January, when the town’s prevention, outreach, and youth services manager heard from a colleague about an uptick in kids showing up to school so high they were hallucinating, she immediately wondered if a potentially dangerous intoxicant called delta-8 that is readily available was behind the incidents.

“People have been seeing delta-8

sold in local vape shops,” she said. “Throughout our region, youth are talking about it.”

Although she and others didn’t know the exact intoxicants involved, she had learned enough about delta-8 on her own that she sent an email to a group of concerned volunteers, colleagues, and other health allies calling attention to its risks and easy availability for teenagers. She also urged regional tobacco control coordinator Maureen Buzby to redouble efforts to

DELTA-8, Page A10

## Bipartisan deals succumb to election-year politics

By Tal Kopan  
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — For a brief window of time on Capitol Hill, it appeared that Republicans and Democrats had done the unthinkable: come to agreements on thorny policy issues with real effects for Americans. The mirage barely lasted a day.

After one of Congress’s least productive years in modern history, naked political considerations are scuttling bipartisan deals. While legislative

slow-walking isn’t uncommon in election years, what’s unusual is the lawmakers seem to be openly admitting it.

► Democrats hoping to salvage wartime funding, A2.

“It depends on one’s [political] tribe which narrative one subscribes to,” Indiana Republican Senator Todd Young said of voters trying to decipher what their lawmakers are doing. “But for those who don’t affiliate with either

tribe, I think they think this looks chaotic and puzzling. And they’re correct on both counts.”

No one declared either deal perfect, with the left objecting to some things in each and liking others, and same for the right. But both offered a classic compromise that would have advanced the ball, however imperfectly, on a number of fronts with significance for Americans, including tax credits for parents of children, nation-

CONGRESS, Page A6



GREGORY BULL/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Donald Trump’s desire to bash President Biden on immigration during the campaign precluded an agreement on border security.

A group of Charlestown homeowners is suing to block a 100-unit permanently affordable apartment development in the Charlestown Navy Yard. **D1.**

The Legislature’s transportation committee is working on language that would ban wearing virtual reality headsets when driving, as videos pop up online. **D1.**

Legislation requiring all elementary schools in Massachusetts to teach children to read using evidence-based curriculums passed a key hurdle in the Legislature. **B1.**

The Museum of Fine Arts will part with a coveted trove of sacred Buddhist relics, agreeing to donate the ancient objects to a Buddhist order in Korea. **B6.**

The EPA tightened limits on fine industrial particles, one of the most common and deadliest forms of air pollution, for the first time in a decade. **A2.**

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas is still possible despite the two sides being far apart on the terms for a deal. **A3.**

Up, up, and hooray

Thursday: Sunny, pleasant. High 40-45. Low 30-35.  
Friday: A few clouds. High 46-51. Low 38-43.  
Sunrise: 6:51 Sunset: 5:07  
Weather, D6. Obituaries, C8-9.

VOL. 305, NO. 39

Suggested retail price \$3.50



0 947725 4