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Senate Democrats consider a judicial push

Impact of Kennedy's anti-vax views weighed

By Kay Lazar and Jason Laughlin
GLOBE STAFF

President-elect Donald Trump has said Robert F. Kennedy Jr., one of the nation's most prominent vaccine skeptics, would have an important role in his new administration.

Health practitioners, experts, and officials are now wrestling with what that could mean for Massachusetts, which has one of the nation's highest vaccination rates but is seeing a small but growing vaccine hesitancy movement.

Kennedy, son of the late senator, attorney general, and presidential candidate

Robert F. Kennedy, has championed the long-debunked idea that vaccines cause autism and urged people to push back against COVID vaccination rules at the height of the pandemic. Trump has said Kennedy could be tasked with addressing corruption in public health agencies.

"RFK Jr. of course is somebody who has been undermining vaccines and vaccine confidence," said Dr. Ashish Jha, President Biden's White House coronavirus response coordinator and dean of Brown University's School of Public Health. "A lot of what will happen as a re-

VACCINES, Page A7

Iranian plot

Prosecutors said Iranian operatives discussed a plan to kill Donald Trump in September. **A2.**



Kyiv call

President-elect Donald Trump spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and during the call handed the phone to Elon Musk. **A4.**

Look to confirm Biden's picks before Jan.

By Carl Hulse
NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — Senate Democrats are weighing a major push in the coming weeks to confirm as many of President Biden's judicial nominees as they can in the lame-duck session of Congress, before their power to reshape the federal courts ends with the Republican takeover of the White House and the Senate in January.

Democrats had hoped to hold onto the Senate and the White House, allowing them to continue their drive to counter-balance the 234 conservative-leaning judges — including three Supreme Court

justices — who were confirmed during the first Trump administration. But with the reelection of Donald Trump and Republicans winning control of the Senate, that possibility is now gone.

Senator Chuck Schumer, Democrat of New York and the majority leader who has prioritized judicial confirmations, on Friday indicated a willingness to devote significant Senate floor time to seating more judges in the postelection session that begins next week. About 30 nominees were already in the confirmation pipeline, and Biden announced two more

JUDGES, Page A7



PHOTOS BY CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF

Jarrett Byrnes toured the Condor Street Urban Wild park. He and his students are monitoring the sea walls to see what creatures move in.

Home on the ocean's edge

Researchers test sea walls made to support marine life in sensitive ecosystems



A pair of periwinkle snails were attached to a Living Seawall panel in East Boston last month.

By Erin Douglas
GLOBE STAFF

The new waterfront residences in East Boston already have tenants: a snail and two mussels that have snuggled into the crevices and pockets of an undulating concrete panel attached to a vertical sea wall of granite blocks.

"Our first pioneer!" proclaimed marine biologist Jarrett Byrnes, who is conducting an experiment in Boston to make the many sea walls here a friendlier habitat for marine organisms in the age of climate change and rising oceans.

While sea walls are expected to get bigger and more common to protect against flooding, modern walls made of poured concrete and even older ones of sheer granite block displace the natural "rocky intertidal" habitat that pro-

vides the shade, moisture, and hiding places that marine life need to thrive. In the 15 miles of Boston shoreline directly exposed to the ocean, about 7 miles have steep sea walls that are inhospitable to marine life, according to a state inventory of coastal infrastructure. Nationwide about half the natural shoreline has been replaced by sea walls, breakwaters, and artificial barriers, according to the Australian Group Living Seawalls.

In an attempt to stave off further habitat loss, scientists in Boston are experimenting with "Living Seawall" panels on three sea walls to help creatures return to sensitive and narrow tidal ecosystems. The 2-by-2-foot panels are arranged horizontally along the intertidal line of the sea walls, so that they are submerged at

SEA WALLS, Page A10

Moulton blasted for trans remarks

Lawmaker takes aim at identity politics

By Samantha J. Gross
GLOBE STAFF

The finger-pointing within the Democratic Party over the presidential election hit a fever pitch in Massachusetts Friday after US Representative Seth Moulton drew a fierce backlash when he appeared to blame identity politics by criticizing the party's support for transgender rights.

In a story in The New York Times on Thursday, the Salem Democrat said identity politics hurt the party, and suggested it should focus more intensely on other matters facing voters.

"Democrats spend way too much time trying not to offend anyone rather than being brutally honest about the challenges many Americans face," Moulton told the newspaper. "I have two little girls, I don't want them getting run over on a playing field by a male or formerly male athlete, but as a Democrat, I'm supposed to be afraid to say that."

The comments drew the ire of fellow Democrats in Massachusetts and denunciations from the state's LGBTQ+ community. On Friday, Moulton's top campaign aide stepped down, though declined to say why.

In Moulton's hometown of Salem, Mayor Dominick Pangallo and the School Committee issued a joint email to the city's residents, saying Moulton's comments "do not reflect our values."

"We want to reassure our LGBTQ+ students that we as

MOULTON, Page A6

Strikes keep kids home in Beverly, Gloucester

Marblehead teachers also set to walk

By Deanna Pan and Mandy McLaren
GLOBE STAFF
and Izzy Bryars
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

BEVERLY — Crushed by the rising cost of living and emboldened by the success of teachers in other Massachusetts communities whose work stoppages won better pay and working conditions, educators in two North Shore communities hit the picket line Friday while colleagues in a third also voted to strike.

Members of the Beverly Teachers Association and the Union of Gloucester Educators rallied outside local schools Friday morning, locking more than

7,000 students out of class. And in Marblehead the teachers union voted to authorize a strike Friday afternoon. As teacher strikes are illegal in Massachusetts, Superior Court judges have ordered the striking teachers in Beverly and Gloucester to go back to work immediately after the Veterans Day holiday.

"I'm not in school today because I feel like our teachers, our staff, and our students deserve better," said Stacie Hall, 52, a sixth-grade humanities teacher in the Beverly Public Schools. "We have been underfunded for far too many years."

Unions in the three communities

TEACHERS, Page A10



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

Striking teachers and their supporters gathered outside Beverly High School on Friday morning.



Give me a rake

Saturday: Sunny, cooler.
High: 50-55. Low: 34-39.

Sunday: Partly sunny.
High: 55-60. Low: 48-53.

Sunrise: 6:28 Sunset: 4:28

Comics and Weather, **D4-5.**

Obituaries, **C10.**

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Israeli fans were assaulted after a soccer game in Amsterdam by hordes of young people apparently riled up by calls on social media to target Jewish people, Dutch authorities said. **A4.**

Thermo Fisher, Akamai, and iRobot announced job cuts in the latest round of layoffs for local companies. **D1.**

MBTA officials and riders celebrated as slow zones are gone from the Orange Line for the first time in 15 years. **B1.**

The top transportation official for the Boston Public Schools apologized during a City Council hearing for the tardy buses that marked the start of the school year. **B1.**