

Official indicted in kickback scheme

In her district, a mixed response

By Niki Griswold
GLOBE STAFF

Marijke Simmons, a lifelong Bostonian and Roxbury resident for about 20 years, thinks of herself as very “civic-minded” and passionate about local politics, her representation on the City Council, and what her elected officials are doing for her community.

When she initially heard that City Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson was the subject of a federal investigation earlier this week, she decided to reserve any judgment until authorities released more evidence or information.

After hearing the details revealed in the federal indictment Friday morning though, she said she felt “nauseous.”

“Kickbacks, wow, that’s a lot to try and overlook or justify,” Simmons said Friday. “If this evidence is true, then yeah, I’m highly disappointed. . . . I’m sorry for her financial troubles,

REACTION, Page A10

THE ALLEGATIONS FROM THE INDICTMENT

‘FERNANDES ANDERSON told Staff Member A ... that FERNANDES ANDERSON would give extra pay in the form of a large bonus to Staff Member A, but that Staff Member A would have to give a portion of the bonus back to FERNANDES ANDERSON.’



CRAIG F. WALKER/GLOBE STAFF

Boston City Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson left the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse on Friday.

Fernandes Anderson pleads not guilty as colleagues, mayor call for her resignation

By Danny McDonald,
Shelley Murphy, Niki Griswold,
and Sean Cotter
GLOBE STAFF

Boston City Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson was arrested Friday on federal wire fraud and theft charges for allegedly pocketing a \$7,000 kickback inside a City Hall bathroom from a relative who worked on her staff.

A six-count federal indictment alleges Fernandes Anderson, 45, hired the relative in December 2022, then gave her a \$13,000 bonus months later with a caveat: She had to funnel more than half of it back to the councilor.

At around 4 p.m. on a Friday in June 2023, the pair met in a bathroom at City Hall, where Fernandes Anderson took the \$7,000 cash from the staffer and stuffed it in her pocket, prosecutors allege. Fernandes Anderson received a one-word text from her relative saying, “Bathroom,” and replied, “Ready,” before meet-

ing to collect the cash, according to the indictment.

“Not only were taxpayer funds being stolen but it was happening right in the building where she works,” US Attorney Joshua Levy said Friday at the federal courthouse in Boston. “I think it adds to the egregiousness of the misconduct.”

At the time, federal prosecutors allege, Fernandes Anderson was struggling financially, missing rent and car payments, facing bank overdraft fees and a \$5,000 fine from the state Ethics Commission for previously hiring relatives to her council staff. The \$13,000 bonus she funneled to her relative, and then allegedly took a cut of, was more than double the bonuses paid to the rest of her staff combined, according to authorities.

The indictment drew quick condemnation from elected officials, including calls by Mayor Michelle Wu, City Council President Ruthzee Louijeune, and others

INDICTMENT, Page A10

Study has surprising look at longevity

Unexpected shift along racial lines is seen in old age

By Kay Lazar
GLOBE STAFF

Imagine two neighbors, both in their mid-to-late 80s. One is Black and the other is white. Which one might have a better chance of reaching 100 years old?

Conventional wisdom would suggest the white octogenarian would have a leg up on that climb to 100, because of the mountains of research showing better access to health care and other opportunities for white Americans. Additionally, Black people in the United States generally have higher death rates at younger ages.

But a new study from Boston and Canadian researchers adds important depth to an unusual reversal of that death equation — that Black octogenarians in the United States have significantly better odds of living to 100 than their white counterparts. And those odds get better with age.

The study, published in the Journal of Internal Medicine, found that white women at 80 years old have a 4 percent chance of living to 100, while the odds are 6 percent for Black women. By the time they hit 90, that stretches to 9 percent for white women — and 13 percent for Black women.

The survival odds are lower for males, but the pattern is the same; a roughly 3 percent chance for Black men at age 80 to make it to 100, but just 2 percent for white men. By age 90, it was 5 percent for white men and 9 percent for Black men.

The researchers also studied

AGING, Page A7

In July, the city said White Stadium renovations would cost taxpayers \$50 million.



Now, it’s ballooned to \$91 million.

By Jon Chesto
GLOBE STAFF

As the Wu administration and a new professional women’s soccer team finalize a deal to redevelop the aging White Stadium in Franklin Park, the project’s estimated cost to the city has risen from \$50 million to \$91 million in recent months.

City officials say their contribution accounts for less than half of the total cost, indicating the entire redevelopment could ring in at around \$200 million, or roughly double earlier estimates. The owners of BOS Nation FC would cover the balance of the work to convert the deteriorating 1940s-era stadium into a modern, 10,000-seat arena for the team and new facilities for Boston Public Schools athletics.

When the Boston Planning & Development Agency board approved the stadium project in July, city officials still pegged their cost at \$50 million. But on Nov. 20, the Public Facilities Commis-

sion approved a significant increase in the city’s design services contract with Jones Architecture Inc. for the city’s half, agreeing to \$9.7 million, up from \$2.8 million. During that meeting, a city project manager said the total cost to the city would be \$90 million.

Officials in the Wu administration on Thursday confirmed the city’s contribution as \$91 million.

In the project plan, much of the existing stadium would be demolished, though several important elements would remain, including the “clamshell wall” on the west side. The team is close to signing a lease with the city to redevelop the west grandstand area, and would pay for its side of the project plus a professional scoreboard and lighting, as well as the stadium’s ongoing maintenance and operations. The city’s portion involves tearing down and rebuilding the east grandstand, adding two wings, and extensive landscaping.

STADIUM, Page B4

After shooting, a surge of anger

Insurance CEO’s death releases ‘pent-up pain’

By Bob Herman
and Tara Bannow
STAT

The targeted killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson has become a defining moment in the zeitgeist of American health care.

The attack was a tragedy that adds to the country’s grim tally of gun deaths. But instead of eliciting sympathy, it opened the

►Gunman left city soon after attack, police said. **A7.**

floodgates for an outpouring of rage, captured across social media and online forums, over the health care system — one that charges people the highest prices in the world, erects financial and bureaucratic barriers to getting care, and has plunged millions of people into debt.

Social media posts have ranged from mournful to apathetic to joyful, including morbid celebrations of Thompson’s death. That deluge has forced people across the country to grapple with two heavy subjects at once: the callousness of a slaying, and an undercurrent of deep-seated anger at a health care industry that makes a lot of money by exploiting Americans.

Much of this came before there were any hints about the shooter’s motive. People assumed someone was driven to kill Thompson because of his job, which is telling, said Yolonda Wilson, an associate professor of health care ethics at Saint Louis University. Wilson added

HEALTH CARE, Page A7

OPPOSITION ADVANCES

Syrian opposition fighters stood atop a seized Syrian air force fighter plane at the Hama military airport. The rebel groups fighting to depose President Bashar Assad of Syria pushed farther south, moving closer to the capital, Damascus. **A6.**



GHAITH ALSAYED/ASSOCIATED PRESS

TikTok is one step closer to disappearing in the United States after a panel of federal judges unanimously upheld a law that could lead to the banning of the popular app by mid-January. **A2.**

The state’s police oversight commission has permanently revoked the certifications of seven

former officers for misconduct. **B1.**

Residents, fellows, and interns at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center went public with their intention to join the Committee of Interns and Residents, a local of Service Employees International Union. **D1.**

A test of brisk tolerance



Saturday: Sunny, breezy. High: 36-41. Low: 30-35.

Sunday: Rainy morning. High: 45-50. Low: 32-37.

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

Obituaries, **C10.**

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