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Healey backs special deal for police official

Inspector general questions training chief's salary, plus pension

By Matt Stout
GLOBE STAFF

Governor Maura Healey is seeking to allow the retired police chief who heads Massachusetts' police training agency to take home both his \$150,000-a-year salary and a

municipal pension, a move that a state watchdog called an extraordinary exception to the rules governing public retirees.

Healey's proposal would exempt Robert Ferullo, the executive director of the state's Municipal Police

Training Committee, from a state law that limits how much government retirees can work in an in-state public job while still collecting their taxpayer-funded pension.

The language has already twice cleared the House in recent years

and is backed by police groups, who argue that the current limits effectively forced Ferullo into a volunteer role — his \$123,187-a-year pension aside — after he hit the state's annual 1,200-hour limit for retirees.

Under Healey's proposal, which she tucked into the state budget

POLICE, Page A10

More than **90%** of the 247 Massachusetts communities that received money from opioid settlements haven't spent any funds

DOLLARS AND SENSE?



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

Steve Jesi left Middleton's Flint Public Library, where Narcan was installed at his request. His daughter died in an overdose.

By Chris Serres
GLOBE STAFF

One July afternoon, Steve Jesi was scouring the internet for updates on the more than \$50 billion in legal opioid settlement funds being delivered to state and local governments.

Jesi, who lost his 33-year-old daughter, Stephenie, to a heroin overdose in 2015, made a surprising discovery on a state website. The town where he lived, Middleton, had received nearly \$20,000 from drug companies accused of flooding communities with painkillers that left millions addicted or dead, yet had not spent any of the money on addiction treatment and overdose prevention programs.

Determined to get answers, Jesi immediately drove to Town Hall, where officials were unaware of the settlement

'How do you let this money sit there in a bank while people are dying?'

STEVE JESI, who has been pushing Middleton officials to use the \$20,000 it has received



JONATHAN WIGGS/GLOBE STAFF

Cara Moser had to pause while speaking at the State House along with other parents hurt by the opioid crisis.

payments. (Traci Mello, director of public health, said the money had gone unnoticed because she was new in her role.)

"I was dumbfounded," said Jesi, a retired executive. "How do you let this money sit there in a bank while people are dying?"

The Middleton example is hardly an anomaly. Less than 5 percent of the \$50 million that Massachusetts communities received from the opioid settlements so far has been spent on addiction-related services and overdose prevention efforts, according to a Globe analysis of municipal

OPIOIDS SETTLEMENT, Page A7

US strike, threats from Iran roil region

Blinken to push Hamas, Israel on aid, hostages

By Vivek Shankar, Charlie Savage, and Matthew Rosenberg
NEW YORK TIMES

The United States launched scores of strikes across the Middle East over the weekend as Secretary of State Antony Blinken set out for the region to push forward negotiations to secure the release of Israelis still held hostage in the Gaza Strip and get more humanitarian aid into the battered enclave.

The latest strike came Sunday in Yemen, where the US military said it had destroyed an antiship cruise missile that belonged to Houthi militants and posed "an imminent threat to US Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region."

It was the third American military action against Iranian-backed militias in as many days: The United States led strikes Saturday against 36 Houthi targets in northern Yemen and Friday carried out airstrikes on more than 85 targets in Syria and Iraq.

US officials insist that the strikes have been carefully calibrated to avoid setting off an open

MIDEAST, Page A6

A turn toward healing replaces picket lines

The first step for Newton: back to school on Monday

By John Hilliard
GLOBE STAFF
and Daniel Kool
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

NEWTON — Ana Tellado, a Spanish teacher at Newton North High School, is a little anxious about Monday. It's the first day back after the city's educators walked the picket lines during a 15-day strike for a new contract — and she doesn't know what to expect.

For Tellado, who has taught at North for 22 years, the return to work marks the end of the most difficult moment of her career — worse, even, than the pandemic, she said. The strike divided the city, turned some parents against teachers, others against school officials, and fractured trust between educators and city leadership.

Over the weekend, Tellado, 50, was thinking about her students. She's concerned they haven't had a chance to practice their Spanish and about

STRIKE, Page A10

Mass. startups sue US over pot barriers

By Diti Kohli
GLOBE STAFF

Meg Sanders runs Canna Provisions, her Western Massachusetts cannabis company, by the book. But in many ways, she believes she's treated like an out-law.

Because marijuana is still illegal under US law, Sanders said, she operates solely in cash

and cannot pursue federal small business loans or take business deductions on her taxes. Financial institutions' skittishness around cannabis's federal illegality also makes it difficult for Sanders to administer employee benefits, donate to charity, or even finance her own home, she said.

"We do everything we should

do as a normal business, but we're not treated fairly," said Sanders, who oversees two dispensaries and a cultivation facility.

Now she is one of four Massachusetts cannabis entrepreneurs on a crusade to be free of those federal restrictions. They have sued the US Justice De-

CANNABIS, Page A7

A former Merck CEO and the co-CEO of KKR investment firm joined Harvard University's oversight board. **B1.**



Taylor Swift won Grammys for album of the year and best pop vocal album for "Midnights." Swift also announced that her new album will arrive April 19. **B6.**

Sun thing's happening



Monday: Sunny and breezy. High 37-42, low 26-31.

Tuesday: A few more clouds. High 33-38, low 27-32.

Weather and comics, **D4-5.** Obituaries, **C9.**

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