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‘Child care is a linchpin. It’s central to our agenda.’

GOVERNOR MAURA HEALEY

HEALEY PUSHES TO BRING CHILD CARE TO MANY MORE



JESSICA RINALDI/GLOBE STAFF

The governor visited a pre-K classroom at the Mystic Valley YMCA in Malden as she made her announcement Tuesday.

\$38.7 million
to expand low- or no-cost preschool options for 4-year-olds to all 26 Gateway cities by 2026

\$75 million
to fund the expansion of child care subsidies to families that earn up to 85 percent of the state median income

\$475 million
to maintain the Commonwealth Cares for Children grants

By Diti Kohli and Samantha J. Gross
GLOBE STAFF

MALDEN — Governor Maura Healey proposed a major expansion of child care in Massachusetts on Tuesday, saying she would include nearly \$590 million in additional funding in her proposed budget for the next fiscal year while signing an executive order to explore partnerships with employers to increase access to early education statewide.

Surrounded by public officials and advocates in the Mystic Valley YMCA, Healey hailed her new “Gateway to Pre-K” agenda as a necessity for providers struggling with the rising cost of labor and operations, and for the future of the state’s economy at large.

“Child care is a linchpin” for Massachusetts, Healey said at the event, with a row of toddlers seated in front. “It’s central to our agenda, both for

families, for education, for workforce, for business development.”

Healey’s proposal would include \$38.7 million to expand low- or no-cost preschool options for 4-year-olds to all 26 Gateway cities by 2026. Twelve Gateway cities — which include Brockton, Fall River, Haverhill, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, Lynn, Malden, New Bedford, Salem, Springfield, and Westfield — currently offer those options through the Commonwealth Pre-school Partnership Initiative.

Another \$75 million would fund the expansion of child care subsidies to families that earn up to 85 percent of the state median income.

Today, residents are eligible for the Child Fare Financial Assistance program if they earn 50 percent or less of the state median income, or \$61,106 for a household of three people. Healey’s proposal

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►What Mass. residents think about the state of the state. **B1.**

Case puts focus on police response to mental issues

Questions raised about SWAT team leaving man in crisis, possibly endangering firefighters

By Sean Cotter
GLOBE STAFF
and Alexa Coultoff
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

The first report of gunshots behind an apartment building in Mattapan came shortly before midnight on Dec 29.

The next round of gunfire was four hours later, again behind the same building.

This time, police found shell casings outside and a man in a second-

floor window waving a flashlight. A SWAT team was called in and spoke with the man, who told them he was alone and suffering a psychotic episode. The officers left after he refused to come out.

The next gunshot came through the apartment door eight hours later, as firefighters were trying to enter to put out a fire.

The 48-year-old resident of the apartment, Julius Allen Owens, was arrested after police said he jumped

out of a window and broke his ankle. A police report said a handgun was recovered at the neighboring building where he was arrested. Officials commended a Boston police SWAT team for taking him into custody without firing any weapons.

But the close call with firefighters has raised questions about why police didn’t take Owens into custody earlier, and whether they adequately investigated the possibility that he had a gun and was a threat to himself or others. The case also casts a spotlight on the challenges police face when confronting people suffering a mental health crisis.

Boston Police Commissioner Michael Cox said the department is reviewing its handling of the case.

“We are looking into it to make sure we did all we could,” Cox said. He declined to comment on the specifics of Owens’s case, but said police cannot enter someone’s home without sufficient cause.

Dennis Galvin, president of the Massachusetts Association for Professional Law Enforcement, said it appeared that, based on details released so far, officers could have immediately sought a search warrant for Owens’s apartment after inter-

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Law’s fine print sucks the juice out of pole-mounted chargers

By Aaron Pressman
GLOBE STAFF

They’ve been a game-changer for city dwellers who want to buy electric vehicles: curbside chargers attached to utility poles. In Melrose and Wilmington, where the first were installed, they provide the driveway-less with a way to fuel up without the cost and inconvenience of digging up sidewalks.

But now that more cities and towns want to sign up, they’re hitting a huge roadblock: It’s no longer legal to purchase or install the chargers in Massachusetts because of an unintended consequence of the state’s 2022 climate law. (Previously installed chargers are not affected.) The law required that EV charging

equipment and many other kinds of appliances and gear meet efficiency standards cataloged by the Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership, a non-profit that works across 12 states and the District of Columbia on sustainability programs. While 172 different pieces of equipment related to EV charging meet the energy efficiency standards, the pole-mounted EV chargers do not.

As of Jan. 1, 2023, products in categories mentioned in the climate law, including electric vehicle supply equipment, “may only be sold or installed in Massachusetts if they are certified by their manufacturer as compliant,” the state Department of Energy Resource said in an email.

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NATIONAL GRID

The state says that EV charging equipment must meet efficiency standards.

The MBTA had another meltdown, this time caused by a failed electrical cable that shut down Orange and Red Line stations while the Green Line was already partly closed, leaving commuters waiting for shuttle buses in the snow. **B1.**

Top Democrats and Republicans in Congress released a \$78 billion tax compromise but it faces long odds. **A2.**

An aging population could spell trouble for the Massachusetts economy. **B5.**

A blast from the past

The B-Side Lounge in Cambridge has been gone since 2008, but some of the team has brought the magic back at the Bluebird Bar in West Newton. And oh those drinks, writes Devra First. **G1.**



Step, crackle, plop

Wednesday: Still icy, breezy. High 26-31. Low 18-23.

Thursday: Not as cold. High 30-35. Low 24-29.

High tide: 3:32 a.m., 3:56 p.m.
Sunrise: 7:10 Sunset: 4:38

Weather and Comics, G6-7.

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