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FEDERAL BUYOUT PLAN BLOCKED

A federal judge on Thursday temporarily blocked President Donald Trump's plan to push out federal workers by offering them financial incentives, Page A7

TODAY'S MUST-READS

SOUTH DEERIELD Man accused of spitting in face of FBI agent

A South Deerfield resident is accused of spitting in the eye and face of an FBI agent Tuesday as agents searched a South Main Street apartment in connection with a weapons investigation at the U.S. Capitol.

James Gerard Pepe III is charged with one count of assaulting a federal officer, according court documents. Full story, Page A7

SPRINGFIELD

Defense lawyer attacks feds

Alleges stonewalling requests for evidence on government informant

BY STEPHANIE BARRY

sbarry@repub.com

What would typically be a low-profile criminal prosecution has turned into a tangle, as lawyers in state and federal court wrangle over evidence and the status of a government informant. a Hampshire Co trial ever since. He faces charg assault with inte assault with a da among others.

Jose Rivera, of Hampshire County, was indicted in 2017 in connecChicopee in July of that year with no injuries, and has languished in a Hampshire County jail awaiting trial ever since.

He faces charges including armed assault with intent to murder and assault with a dangerous weapon, among others.

Defense lawyer Dana Goldblatt recently filed a lawsuit in U.S. information from the local U.S. Attorney's office on the status of man named Efrain Morales — whom a former Hampden assistant district attorney told Goldblatt was under federal investigation but had yet to be indicted.

Named as defendants are the U.S. Department of Justice and former Acting Massachusetts U.S. Attorney Joshua Levy. Leading up to trial, prosecutors are obligated under the law to turn over any information to defense attorneys that would allow them to attack a witness's credibility on cross-examination.

Goldblatt contends this hasn't happened and has attempted to get the case against Morales dismissed. The defense lawyer argues the

tion with an alleged shooting in

District Court seeking to compel

SEE INFORMANT, PAGE A2

STATE Feds probe MIAA over trans athletes

Massachusetts high school athletics policies are under investigation for "Title IX violations" by the U.S. Department of Education, the agency announced Thursday, a day after President Donald Trump issued an order aimed at transgender athletes.

DOE said it was launching "directed investigations" of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), San Jose State University, and the University of Pennsylvania. Full story, Page A3

STATE Super Bowl coin toss cleared for wagering

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission on Thursday voted 3-2 to allow sports betting companies to offer wagers on one of the very first actions to take place at this Sunday's Super Bowl, the opening coin toss. Full story, Page A3

"If they do have anything of substance, if they can print the names of the abusers that have been shielded by the church ... that would be a tremendous benefit to somebody suffering in silence."

DAVID O'REGA, WHO LED SUPPORT GROUPS FOR THOSE ABUSED BY PRIESTS IN WORCESTER AND THE BOSTON AREA



Jim Saviano sits near a photograph of his late brother, Phil Saviano, who was an outspoken critic of those who covered up the abuse of children by Catholic clergy. Investigators from the Massachusetts attorney general's office interviewed Phil Saviano in this room, where he was in hospice, on Nov. 4, 2021. He was a survivor of abuse in the Diocese of Worcester. (NANCY EVE COHEN / NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC MEDIA)

STATE

Inside the clergy sex abuse probe

Housing crisis sparks exodus

State releases report, citing 200,000 people leaving Massachusetts

By NAMU SAMPATH

nsampath@repub.com

Everyone but college-age students are leaving Massachusetts, according to a comprehensive report from the state's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities published Thursday.

In 2022, roughly 200,000 individuals moved out of the commonwealth. Due to a plethora of universities and colleges in the state, 18- to 24-year-olds are attracted to Massachusetts.

But "at every other age group Massachusetts is losing more residents than it attracts," the report says, and working adults between ages 24 and 44 are the age group "with the highest rate of outmigration."

It's a factor of the housing crisis in Massachusetts. Officials said people are being priced out of housing units statewide. Even those living comfortably will be impacted at some point. The report was put together by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Donahue Institute, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and Dain Research, a public policy research group in eastern Massachusetts. Officials say the report is a first-of-its-kind encompassing review of the state of housing in the commonwealth. The report explores the challenges of having a limited housing stock and what it would take to create housing that is affordable, accessible and available to a diversifying and growing population. Developers seeking to build housing are reporting issues with obtaining special permits, conflicting state and local regulations and codes, and concerns about financial feasibility. "This slows housing production at a time when Massachusetts needs it most and creates an environment where only the most experienced and often larger firms are able to participate in SEE HOUSING, PAGE A2

WEATHER

Partly sunny and windy, then clouds increasing. **High:** 35°; **Low:** 17°

EXPANDED WEATHER, A8



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What survivors, advocates know about Mass. AG's unreleased inquiry into Catholic dioceses

BY NANCY EVE COHEN

New England Public Media

t's been about five years years since the Massachusetts attorney general's office launched an investigation into child sexual abuse by priests at three Catholic dioceses in the state.

Back then, Gov. Maura T. Healey was the attorney general. The state's current top prosecutor, Andrea Campbell, said her office is still seeking court approval to release the results of the investigation.

"I inherited a report that was completed, sitting there. And now I'm doing what I can to see what we can do in terms of releasing it," Campbell said on GBH Radio.

But survivors and advocates aren't waiting. They're revealing what they know about the attorney general's inquiry.

The investigation started as early as 2019 and continued at least until November 2021. Early that month, Assistant Attorney General Helle Sachse interviewed Phil Saviano. Matthew Stone, a state trooper, was also at the meeting.

Saviano was a survivor of child sexual abuse at the Worcester Diocese and an outspoken advocate for



The grave of Phil Saviano in Douglas. Saviano was an outspoken survivor of clergy sexual abuse who started the New England chapter of SNAP, Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests. Pravda Vitëzi means "truth prevails" in Czech. (NANCY EVE COHEN / NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC MEDIA)

justice for those who were abused by priests. At the time of the meeting, he was in hospice at his brother's house, dying of cancer.

Brooks Egerton was also there. A former investigative reporter at The Dallas Morning News, Egerton is writing a biography of Phil Saviano. On Saviano's request, he sat in on the meeting.

Although Saviano's voice was weak, he answered the assistant attorney general's questions and asked some of his own, Egerton recalled.

"Phil asked [Sachse] if the dioceses knew about this investigation," Egerton said. "She said that they did that they had received grand jury subpoenas and that SEE **CLERGY**, PAGE A2 CONTINUES FROM PAGE A1

development," the report says.

But not to fret.

"These are all solvable problems," the report says, as long as there is collaboration from different stakeholders.

In August, when Gov. Maura T. Healey signed the \$5.6 billion Affordable Homes Act, the state's largest investment into housing, into law, officials promised the bill would spend more money on housing production, improve the existing housing stock and introduce new policies that would encourage housing production.

Currently, there are over 3 million housing units in Massachusetts. But existing housing stock is aging and most units are not equipped to handle the effects of climate change.

Between 2018 and 2022, there were just over a quarter of a million vacant units statewide; only about 2% of the units were available to rent or buy, the report said. The rest of the units had either been listed as seasonal-use homes, or had been bought or rented, but not yet occupied, the report continued.

Over the next decade, the state will have to produce about 115,600 homes to meet the existing housing shortage, which does not account for any growth of the state's population.

Despite having the second highest median income in the U.S., at \$101,000, "it's still not enough for middle income households to find homes they can afford," the report says.

While the median cost of homes in the Bay State has risen by about 73% over the last two decades, median incomes have only increased by about 4%, creating fewer pathways for people who are low or middle-income to afford homes, the report says. Affordable rentals are also disappearing.

LOTTERIES

MASS. DAILY NUMBERS			MASS CASH	
Thursday, Feb.			Feb. 6	13-22-25-30-34
		Evening	Feb. 5	7-19-23-27-28
Exact order	1382	3708	Feb. 4	4-12-13-24-28
All 4	\$4,514	\$5,697		
First or last 3	\$632	\$798	Top prize \$100,0	00
Any 2	\$54	\$68		
Any 1	\$5	\$7	MEGABUCKS	5
Any order			Feb. 5	16-23-24-27-31-36
All 4	\$188	\$237	Estimated jackpot: \$500,000	
First 3	\$105	\$133	Feb. 1	10-17-28-33-36-42
Last 3	\$105	\$133		
Previous numbers drawn			LUCKY FOR LIFE	
Wednesday	6295	9037	Feb. 6	Not available
Tuesday	3520	6544	Lucky Ball: NA	
Monday	6569	8665	Jackpot: \$1,000 a day for life	
Sunday	2846	5297	Feb. 5	7-9-25-37-39
Saturday	0124	6077	Lucky Ball: 3	, 0 20 0, 00
Friday	7311	7883	Edony Dun. 0	
MEGA MILLIONS			POWERBALL	
Feb. 4	14-24-	31-53-54	Feb. 5	19-27-30-50-62
Megaball: 1; Megaplier: 3			Powerball: 14; Power Play: 3	
Estimated jackpot: \$94 million			Estimated jackpot: \$133 million	
Jan. 31		48-56-63	Feb. 3	12-37-47-54-60

In 2020, regions across the state reported on their housing stock. In order to meet housing needs in the Pioneer Valley region, which is described in the report as Hampden and Hampshire counties, there will need to be a 5-7.5% increase in housing each year, according to the report.

Western Massachusetts houses a higher share of residents with disabilities, which is partially attributed to the older age of residents in the Hampden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire counties. Around 15% of the population of the Pioneer Valley region is disabled; compared to 12% of the state's overall population, the report said.

For disabled residents, there are a number of barriers that affect access to housing - including units that meet their needs are non-existent, unavailable or costly, which prices out people looking for a decent place to lay their heads, according to the report.

Looking to the future, the report says that baby boomer generation, who are between 60 and 80 years old, and millennials, who are in their mid-20s to mid-30s - which are the two ballooning populations in the state - will have "an outsized impact on future housing planning."

"In the year 2000 the Baby Boomer generation formed an outsized number of households to support their growing families. They constituted 789,000 family households," the report says.

The same is repeating for millennials, who in recent years, "have started forming households at a rapid clip, and their needs have become a major driver of net housing demand," says the report.

Generation X, which lies between baby boomers and millennials, had fewer children. As a result, there were fewer family households; a trend that is forecasted to continue with Generation Z.

BOSTON

Houseboat death ruled a homicide, victim ID'd

By Luis Fieldman lfieldman@masslive.com

Boston police confirmed Wednesday afternoon that a death on a houseboat in Charlestown is ruled a homicide and that the victim died from multiple stab wounds.

Joseph Donohue, 65, of Charlestown, is the victim in the killing, according to the Boston Police Department. Donohue's family released a statement on Wednesday: "Our family is heartbroken by

this unimaginable loss. "Joe was a wonderful family member, a cherished friend, and a trusted colleague. Always generous and kind, he

dedicated his life and career

to helping others. He is loved and will be deeply missed. We're grateful for the love and support we've received, and we kindly ask for privacy during this difficult time." Police were called to the Shipway Place at 10:43 p.m. on Feb. 2 to investigate an

incident on a houseboat. That night, a woman later identified as Nora Nelson, 24, was arrested on unrelated warrants at the scene of the investigation, police previously said.

At Nelson's arraignment on Tuesday, prosecutors named Nelson as a "person of interest" in the suspicious death. The investigation into the death is ongoing.

Clergy

CONTINUES FROM PAGE A1

the investigators had spoken with both ... diocesan attorneys and diocesan managers."

According to Egerton, Sachse said, "The dioceses had responded by producing records to the attorney general."

She told Saviano one reason they wanted to talk with him is because he had so many records from the Worcester Diocese from an earlier lawsuit.

'She said ... that's a reason for talking to Phil, because she had no way to know whether what the diocese produced to the AG was complete," Egerton said.

Sachse told Saviano the attorney general's office was not planning to publish a large church-by-church breakdown of individual cases and predators, as has been done in some other cities and states, according to Egerton.

"They were not trying to go back over great numbers of individual cases in painstaking detail. The focus was going to be on institutional response to clergy sexual abuse allegations, making recommendations on how to prevent this disaster from ever happening again-'disaster' being my word," he said.

The assistant attorney general told Saviano the investigation might also recommend changes to the law to help survivors seeking justice.

But some survivors of abuse who answered investigators' questions want the attorney general's office also to name credibly accused priests to help victims heal. David O'Regan, 74, was interviewed by investigators at their office in Boston in 2021.

"If they do have anything of substance, if they can print the names of the abusers hat have been shielded h



Skip Shea stands outside the office of the Diocese of Worcester on Jan. 10. Shea, a survivor of child sexual abuse that started when he was 11 years old at St. Mary's Parish in Uxbridge, has called on the Massachusetts attorney general's office to release its investigation into three dioceses in the state. (NANCY EVE COHEN / NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC MEDIA)

But from the bottom, I was able to work my way up, get the help that I needed, process the harm that was done to me, and find joy and happiness in my life again," O'Regan said.

Skip Shea also met with investigators and a state trooper, on September 29, 2021.

Shea said he was abused by priests from the Worcester Diocese starting when he was 11. Since his meeting with investigators, he has sent emails, a hand-written letter and picketed in front of the attorney general's office asking for the results of the investigation to be released.

'So other victims can then probably see this and then come forward and get the justice they deserve," Shea said.

But it may be an unconventional justice, said Terence McKiernan of Bishop Accountability, which tra investigations like the one started in Massachusetts. He and the organization's co-director, Anne Barrett Doyle, also met with investigators on Oct. 25, 2021.



Terence McKiernan, president of Bishop Accountability, visits the cemetery in Douglas where Phil Saviano is buried. McKiernan helped arrange for Saviano, a survivor of abuse at the Worcester Diocese, to meet with investigators from the Massachusetts attorney general's office as part of their inquiry into the diocese. (NANCY EVE COHEN / NEW ENGLAND PUBLIC MEDIA)

reports on inquiries like this dioceses, contain-from a le- in pounding on the door of gal perspective - allegations.

"Were Phil here today, he one, into child sexual abuse at would probably be very active tł attorney general for the last three years, trying to get that thing loose," Jim Saviano said. In an email to survivor Skip Shea, dated April 16, 2024, the attorney general's office wrote that "it's still in the process of seeking court approval to release the Diocese report." That was sent more than nine months ago. The attorney general's office recently emailed NEPM it is "bound to rules of law that do not allow us to publicly comment on our efforts to release the report." The Fall River, Springfield and Worcester dioceses did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

TODAY'S OBITUARIES

Megaball: 2; Megaplier: 2

Listed by name, these obituaries can be found in today's paper. You may view these obituaries and sign the guest book at masslive.com/obituaries.

Bye Sr., Joseph Cavanaugh, Evelyn Eugenio, Maria **Gregory, Paulina** Illig, Thelma Kot, Mildred

Masaschi, Barbara Musiak, William Smith, Anne Vanderhoof, Robert Whitelock, Ralph and Louise

Powerball: 17; Power Play: 3

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the church ... that would be a tremendous benefit to somebody suffering in silence," O'Regan said.

That's something many dioceses, including Springfield and Fall River, have done, but not the Worcester Diocese.

O'Regan is a survivor and led support groups in Worcester and in Boston for those abused by priests.

He said his own healing started 40 years after he was abused when the Boston Globe published articles on the coverup of sexual abuse by priests. That public reckoning helped him a lot, but it wasn't easy at first.

"It sent me in a downward spiral into deep depression.

Informant

CONTINUES FROM PAGE A1

feds are running afoul of their own policies by refusing to offer information on Morales despite repeated requests. She adds that state prosecutors also have, at a minimum, slow-walked their obligations causing multiple delays in Rivera's trial.

Neil Desroches, chief of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Springfield, declined comment. However, a reply to the complaint by the government argues it behaved properly under federal rules of evidence and privacy concerns for cooperating witnesses.

According to Rivera's lawsuit, when Morales was in jail with Rivera he told prosecutors Rivera was a "wellknown assassin" who had confessed to the shooting.

Morales made other scurri-

McKiernan said it can take decades before a victim comes forward after being abused as a child. By then, the statute of limitations, which might allow prosecution has often run out.

"In lieu of prosecution, you at least have the thorough criminal investigation that's done by an AG's team, expressed in a report, even if the person who did the crime can't be prosecuted," McKiernan said.

McKiernan said often

lous claims about Rivera, the lawsuit says. Among them:

'The Plaintiff was a drug dealer who used his appointed lawyer to smuggle drugs into the prison. The Plaintiff was having an affair with his lawyer and that they were having inappropriate relations at the jail during visits ... (and) Plaintiff had a crossbow and was going to shoot the prosecutor with it," the

claim reads. None of the allegations against the attorney proved to be true. But it is not uncommon for prosecutors to introduce statements from "jailhouse snitches" at trial.

Morales is currently living in Florida, according to Goldblatt, and could not be reached for comment.

Morales faces pending charges in state court for alleged heroin dealing in Agawam, records show. He was indicted along with his

"They do not have the standing in law of an indictment, a prosecution and a conviction. But because the investigations are done by professionals and are done carefully, the reports have a kind of authority that is important to survivors and also important to the community as a whole," he said.

But this report has not come out.

Phil Saviano, who spoke with investigators in 2021, died just a few weeks later.

Sitting in the sun-filled room where his late brother met with investigators, Phil Saviano's brother, Jim, said Phil would be disappointed the investigation is still not public.

wife – a matter that was withheld until recently from the defense, according to Goldblatt.

Court records show Damaris Morales was charged in 2022 with improper storage of firearms.

Because of the delays in Rivera's case and in receiving potentially exculpatory evidence from prosecutors, the defense lawyer filed a motion Thursday in Hampden Superior Court to exclude Morales as a witness against her client.

The Defendant asserts and argues that for almost three years the Commonwealth has failed to disclose promises, rewards, and inducements that it made to Efrain Morales, a witness against the Defendant, regarding pending charges against the witness's wife," the motion reads.

"The Commonwealth

intended to call the witness without notifying the defense that his wife's freedom depended on his testimony," the filing adds.

Goldblatt refers to Morales as the prosecution's star witness. She also argues she was "lucky enough" to independently discover the pending case against Damaris Morales without the commonwealth's disclosure. A spokesperson for the Hampden District Attorney's office said it does not comment on ongoing prosecutions.

"This case is an ongoing prosecution, and any pretrial matters brought by the defendant will be addressed by the court. In the meantime, this office continues its work in the courtrooms of Hampden County to keep our public safe," said Elijah Ayers, spokesperson for Hampden District Attorney Anthony D. Gulluni.