

Winthrop election hinges on housing act

Ballot box the latest stage for ongoing, divisive fight over construction, funding

By Andrew Brinker
GLOBE STAFF

WINTHROP — From the front porch of his pastel yellow bungalow, Michael Kinlin can see the sea water lap at the banks of Belle Isle Marsh.

He wants Winthrop to protect the neighborhood from flood waters that surge from the marsh and swamp his street, but is frustrated that the effort is being held up by a seemingly unrelated issue: the town's failure to comply with a state law requiring communities to plan for new housing.

Kinlin's neighborhood has experienced flooding during bad storms or king tides, and almost every neighbor on Morton Street has a story of submerged cars and sandbags overwhelmed by rising water; some have even sold their homes at a discount just to get away from it. A few weeks ago, during a heavy rain, the street was inundated.

To protect the neighborhood, residents want the town to build a berm. But a \$1.2 million grant Winthrop needs to get started is being held up by the state because town leaders have failed to rezone for new housing as required under Massachusetts law.

"Our neighborhood is literally underwater," said Kinlin, who is running in Tuesday's election for Winthrop Town Council. "And we can't get the town to do anything about it."

The law is the MBTA Communities Act, which requires communities served by the T to allow more multifamily housing or risk losing access to key state funds.

It is the biggest effort to boost housing construction in the state in decades, but it has inflamed passions in many towns across Eastern Massachusetts — perhaps nowhere as much as in

WINTHROP, Page A7

For Democrats, vote a chance for momentum

Key contests in blue states; interest high for NYC race

By Shane Goldmacher
NEW YORK TIMES

After more than nine months of President Trump using the full force of the federal government to impose his will on the nation, elections across the country Tuesday will offer the Democratic Party its biggest chance yet to assert its viability as a serious opposition party.

No federal contests that could provide a meaningful check on Trump's powers in Washington will be decided. But races for governor in New Jersey and Virginia headline an Election Day that will provide a critical update on the state of the Democrats' rebuilding project and a preview of the fault lines in the 2026 midterm elections.

The 2025 races have been buffeted by many of the same forces that shaped the 2024 race, led by an affordability crisis that is pinching voters in cities, suburbs, and rural areas alike. Unlike in the 2024 election, it is now Trump and his ambitious regime of tariffs that are seen as driving the economy.

Ken Martin, the chair of the Democratic National Committee, predicted in an interview that victories Tuesday would help his party head into 2026 with "a head full of steam."

"Where there were once strong headwinds against the Democratic Party, there now seems to be wind at our back and momentum for sure," Martin said. He insisted, "it's not just an anti-Trump wave that we're seeing," but a powerful chord that Democrats have struck with their message on economics and affordability.

Of course, it helps Democrats that the biggest contests are being held in states that Trump lost. The flip side is that any defeats in those states

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STAN GROSSFELD/GLOBE STAFF

For people who live and work around Harvard Square, the Fridge in the Square offers food and, sometimes, clothing. It is one of several such free refrigerators around Greater Boston seeking to meet the increasing needs of struggling residents. As I See It, B1.

US will tap contingency funds for partial food aid payments

Amount, timing unclear for recipients; USDA warns against further help

By Edward Fitzpatrick, Katie Johnston, Mara Kardas-Nelson, and Nick Stoico
GLOBE STAFF

The Trump administration on Monday told a federal judge in Rhode Island that it will tap contingency funds to make partial food assistance payments for 42 million low-income and disabled people across the nation this month.

The move comes after federal judges in Boston and Providence last week issued similar orders for President Trump to use emergency reserves for the payments during the government shutdown.

However, the US Department of Agriculture, which oversees the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program known as SNAP, warned it will not use other federal money to fund the full payments, extending uncertainty to people who rely on the help.

News of the partial reprieve was greeted with a mix of relief and concern.

►Four Head Start centers in Massachusetts forced to close due to shutdown. B1.

"I want to be happy that I'm going to get half of my benefits, but now I'm already thinking about the following month, and January and February," said Janin Otero, 46, of Roxbury, a mother of three who receives a \$900 benefit. "I'll believe it when I see it in my account."

SNAP is a key piece of the nation's safety net and serves 1 in 8 Americans at a cost of more than \$8 billion per month.

It's not clear how much beneficiaries will receive, nor how quickly they will see value

SNAP, Page A6

SHUTDOWN
DAY 35

13
Failed Senate votes

Sept. 19
Date of last House session

594,048
Workers furloughed

35 days
Equals longest ever

The ocean glider Redwing is expected to collect data that will sharpen global climate models and improve hurricane forecasting.



COURTESY OF TELEDYNE MARINE

Torpedo-shaped robot's mission: ply the world's oceans for key data

Challenges include ships, giant squids

By Kate Selig
GLOBE STAFF

From the seaside village of Woods Hole on Cape Cod, where ferries depart daily bound for Martha's Vineyard, an autonomous ocean glider recently embarked on

a far more ambitious course: a first-ever trip around the world.

The glider, named Redwing, dives and climbs in slow, sawtooth zigzags, sometimes a kilometer down. Its yellow, torpedo-shaped body is equipped with sensors that measure salinity, temperature, and depth — basic variables for monitoring the seas.

Ocean gliders have quietly trans-

formed marine science. Hundreds now patrol the seas, collecting data that sharpen global climate models, improve hurricane forecasting, and track the movement of marine life.

The newest generation, of which Redwing is a part, can travel farther and carry more sensors, opening a clearer window into the state of the ocean.

OCEAN GLIDER, Page A6

Lots of traffic bring little distress to small town

By Billy Baker
GLOBE STAFF

GEORGETOWN — As far as small towns go, Georgetown's downtown is about as cookie cutter as it gets. A bank. A couple pizza places and barber shops. A gas station. A nail salon and two yoga studios. There's even a little hobby shop that's been there for decades.

And at its center is a traffic light, where East and West Main streets meet and are intersected by Central Street and North Street. Swing through this Merrimack Valley town at lunchtime and it will feel like that quiet little Main Street you find anywhere in New England.

Just don't try to get there at rush hour.

That's because those streets are also state routes, 97 and 133, that serve as major cut-throughs, and the line to get through that traffic light can easily stretch for 20 minutes.

"It's comically bad. I'll sit on my porch and just watch the traffic," said John Maglio, 52, who lives a mile from that traffic light, just off Route 133, which serves as a shortcut between I-95 and I-495 for drivers who don't want to go all the way north to the interchange in Salisbury. "My kids will call me and want me to pick them up in town, and I'm just like 'Walk!'"

GEORGETOWN, Page A7



The Back Bay Association has big plans for a district encompassing some 40 blocks of skyscrapers, brownstones, and everything in between. The biggest obstacle: the group's longtime benefactor. **D1.**

Diane Ladd has died. The

three-time Academy Award nominee for best supporting actress was 89. **C9.**

Israel released the remains of 45 Palestinians after receiving the bodies of three of its soldiers in the latest positive step of the cease-fire. **A3.**



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A windy candidate

Tuesday: Lots of sun, high winds. High 56-61, low 41-46.
Wednesday: Wind and showers. High 57-62, low 42-47.
Sunrise: 6:21. Sunset: 4:33.
Weather and comics, **D5-6.**