

Shutdown comes to an end

Trump signs government funding bill, ending a record 43-day disruption

By Kevin Freking, Joey Cappelletti and Matt Brown
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump signed a government funding bill Wednesday night, ending a record 43-day shutdown that caused financial stress for federal workers who went without paychecks, stranded scores of travelers at airports

and generated long lines at some food banks. The shutdown magnified partisan divisions in Washington as Trump took unprecedented unilateral actions — including canceling projects and trying to fire federal workers — to pressure Democrats into relenting on their demands. The Republican president blamed the situation on Democrats

and suggested voters shouldn't reward the party during next year's midterm elections. "So I just want to tell the American people, you should not forget this," Trump said. "When we come up to midterms and other things, don't forget what they've done to our country." The signing ceremony came just hours after the House passed the measure on a mostly party-

line vote of 222-209. The Senate had already passed the measure Monday. Democrats wanted to extend an enhanced tax credit expiring at the end of the year that lowers the cost of health coverage obtained through Affordable Care Act marketplaces. They refused to go along with a short-term spending bill that did not include **Shutdown continues on A4**

INSIDE:
Timeline for restart of SNAP benefits remains uncertain. **A2**
State delegation votes against reopening federal government. **A3**
Business: Small grocers and convenience stores feel an impact as customers go without SNAP benefits. **A8**
Nation/World: Federal workers question whether shutdown was worth it. **A12**



Ken Dixon/Hearst Connecticut Media
State Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff, D-Norwalk, says Thursday in the state Capitol that the housing bill scheduled for adoption would be the culmination of months of negotiations since Gov. Ned Lamont's June veto of a related bill. To Duff's left is Sen. Saud Anwar, D-South Windsor.

'We have to hit it head-on'

State Senate convenes to adopt housing legislation, \$500M contingency fund

By Ken Dixon and Paul Hughes
STAFF WRITERS

HARTFORD — Less than 12 hours after the Democrat-dominated state House finished voting on legislation to expand housing opportunities, create a \$500 million fund for backstopping potential losses in federal aid and protect

immigrants in state courthouses, the Senate gaveled into session Thursday morning. Minority Republicans promised a long day of amendments and debate, but Democrats were prepared to flex their more than 2-to-1 majority to eventually put the finishing touches on the bills and send them to Gov. Ned Lamont for final action. Lamont said he's looking forward to signing them.

For Senate Majority Leader Bob Duff, the housing bill in particular, revised over the summer and autumn to address the governor's opposition to parking requirements and the need to reinforce local control, was important. **Senate continues on A6**

Lawmakers take up blocking civil ICE arrests at courthouses, tightening data-sharing rules

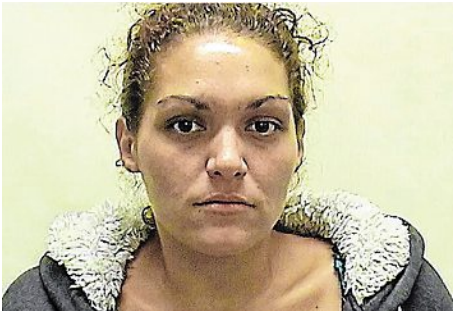
By Paul Hughes
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — Connecticut legislators are delving back into the national debate on immigration enforcement as they return for

a two-day fall special session. The state House of Representatives was slated Wednesday to vote to approve additional protections for immigrants in response to stepped federal immigration

enforcement actions, including arrests and detentions by U.S. Immigration and Customs agents at or near state courthouses in the state. The state Senate is scheduled to meet Thursday to

take action on the immigrant protections and other legislation on the agenda. Immigrant rights advocates rallied in support of the legislation outside the House chamber at the state **Blocking continues on A6**



Courtesy of Middletown Police Department
The police photo of Lashanda Gregory when she was arrested in 2014 in the death of a man in a Branford hotel. She is now planning to sue the state on claims she was sexually assaulted by correction officers.

Email shows state official blamed inmate for her sexual assaults by prison guards

By Lisa Backus
STAFF WRITER

In an email to a lawyer planning to sue the state over alleged sexual assaults by prison guards at York Correctional Institution, a Connecticut assistant attorney general claimed the plaintiff was "contributorily negligent by being the instigator/willing participant in the incidents," according to documents obtained by CT Insider. Assistant Attorney General Matthew Beizer suggested a \$25,000 settlement to Lashanda Gregory to head off her lawsuit, which she was granted the right to file against the state last week, according to the email sent to her attorney Alexander Taubes. But Gregory, who is serving a 25-year sentence for first-degree manslaughter and third-degree robbery in the death of a man at a Branford motel, said in an interview Wednesday from a Delaware prison that "prison politics" make it impossible to turn down correction officers who want sexual favors. "Who was I going to go to?" the 38-year-old said in an interview with CT Insider. Her story is not unique, according to a report issued by Disability Rights Connecticut in 2024. From 2019 to 2022, there were 100 complaints of sexual misconduct at York Correctional Institution — Connecticut's only female prison — ranging from harassment to assault, the report said. Keeping quiet about the injustices inmates face every day is a survival mindset, Gregory said. "Blue (law enforcement) is always going to defend blue," **Assaults continues on A6**

New indoor winter market launches in Bridgeport's Arcade Mall

By Brian Lockhart
STAFF WRITER

BRIDGEPORT — Natalie Pryce, manager of the new and, for now, temporary downtown winter marketplace and food hall, has a challenge for potential customers. "Take \$25 out of their Starbucks (coffee shop) budget and contribute to the market," she said Wednesday while preparing for Thursday's grand opening at one of the va-

cant storefronts within the historic Arcade Mall. One of the project's goals is to create a cold-weather space to buy fresh produce, given that the farmer's market that operates a few blocks away at McLevy Green has shut down until next summer. Also offering other types of local food — plus crafts, gifts and entertainment — the venue will be open Thursdays 3 to 8 p.m. and Saturdays 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. through

Dec. 20, except for Thanksgiving. Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP benefits are accepted. The winter market and food hall is a partnership between the Downtown Special Services District and the Bridgeport Arts and Culture Council and funded with a \$5,000 grant awarded this past summer by the Connecticut Main Street Center. "It's a pilot program,"

emphasized Pryce. "We're testing it." On Wednesday she, DSSD head Lauren Coakley Vincent and other helpers were putting the finishing touches on the space within 1001 Main St., which over the last dozen years has seen lots of turnover. In 2013, it housed a high-end market that lasted six months, then an art supplies store that lasted around four years, and most recently **Mall continues on A4**



Christian Abraham/Hearst Connecticut Media
Lauren Coakley Vincent, head of the Bridgeport Downtown Special Services District.