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White House proposes Head Start rules rollback

Nearly 5,000 families in Conn. would be affected

By **Natasha Sokoloff**
and **Colin Tiernan**
STAFF WRITERS

The Trump administration is moving to overhaul Head Start by rolling back the regulations that some experts and advocates say have made the childcare program a lifeline for the neediest children and families in Connecticut and in the na-

tion.
The proposal would rescind more than 1,000 regulatory provisions for Head Start centers, including longstanding rules for staff-to-child ratios, group sizes, program hours, curriculum expectations, discipline and more, according to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking posted online on Thursday morning.
Federal officials told reporters Wednesday evening that the new proposal would strip back the standards currently spelled out in more than 100 pages and prioritize local control. It's a dramatic ef-

fort to deregulate the decades-old early education program, which provides federally funded preschool and antipoverty services to thousands of Connecticut families.
Those same standards make Head Start programs among the highest-quality early care and education providers, said Caitlin Lombardi, an associate professor in the Human Development and Family Sciences department at the University of Connecticut. Lombardi was responding Tuesday to the prospect of a rollback after reporting in The Nation.

"So currently, if a child is attending a Head Start program, there's a certain sort of floor-level of quality that is really backed by tons of research, tons of program improvements over 60 years now to get the program where it is in order to best support children's development," she said.
The program, which has historically received bipartisan support, is the latest target in the Trump administration's goal to overhaul education in the U.S. and remove what it sees as red tape.

Head Start continues on A7

Children's hospital to end youth gender care

Medical center settles with Trump administration

By **Richard Chumney**
STAFF WRITER

HARTFORD — Connecticut Children's Medical Center has formally agreed to end all gender-affirming care for children and provide \$500,000 to former patients as part of a settlement with the Trump administration.

The U.S. Justice Department announced the agreement Wednesday, about a year after the Hartford-based hospital said it was winding down its youth gender care program amid pressure from the federal government.

"This resolution is a reminder to hospitals, medical providers and pharmaceutical companies that the Justice Department will vigorously enforce federal law, especially where the lives of children are endangered," Associate Attorney General Stanley Woodward said in a statement.

Federal officials said the settlement restricts Connecticut Children's from administering puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones, and from performing gender-affirming surgeries on patients younger than 18.

The agreement also calls for the hospital to pay an undisclosed monetary penalty and dedicate an additional \$500,000 in medical care for individuals "living with the harmful consequences" of gender-affirming care, officials said.

The announcement marks the latest move by President Donald Trump's administration to curtail gender-affirming care for youth with gender dysphoria. The Justice Department has entered into similar settlements with Texas Children's Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic Foundation.

The effort by the federal government has drawn strong criticism from advocates for **Hospital continues on A2**

BASEBALL



Albany Times Union file photo

Attendees enter the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., on May 19, 2014. Inducted in it is former Connecticut Gov. Morgan Bulkeley, the first president of the National League.

Was Bulkeley an erroneous inductee to Hall of Fame?

Historians say his posthumous selection is controversial as his stint as National League's first president was short

By **Alex Putterman**
STAFF WRITER

In late 1937, a group of baseball executives gathered to choose pioneers of the game to be inducted into the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y. Whoever they picked would be the first non-players tabbed for that honor.

On Dec. 7, the group announced its selections: legendary managers John McGraw and Connie Mack, early baseball legend George Wright, famed American League founder Ban Johnson and, finally, the first ever president of the National League, Morgan Bulkeley.

Bulkeley, at the time, was well known in Connecticut. He had spent more than four decades as president of Aetna, one of the state's largest companies. He had been Hartford's mayor in the 1880s, governor for four years after that, and a U.S. senator from 1905 to 1911. A bridge and a high school in Hartford already bore his name. Now he would take his place among baseball's immortals, next

Bulkeley continues on A5



Library of Congress

Morgan Bulkeley

Lamont attacks Elliott, quiet about \$15B in state surpluses



Dan Haar

COMMENTARY

Starting in the summer of 2025, I told anyone who asked about Gov. Ned Lamont's re-election chances that he had 14 billion reasons to assure himself a win. Plus, he had a relaxed and confident personal style that would float him above any campaign mudslinging and burnish his image as a steady skipper.

Those 14 billion reasons – the combined budget surpluses he racked up



as governor – grew to \$15 billion by this summer. That's the total the state has paid down its pension fund debt above what was required (\$11 billion including a pay-



Elliott



Lamont

ment next month); added to the rainy-day fund (\$2.5 billion since 2019); and set aside to pay for Trump administration cuts and early childhood education (\$1.5 billion).

Surely Lamont would tout the triumphant \$15 billion **Haar continues on A7**

SPORTS



Women's basketball: Former UConn Huskies Bueckers, Collier and Stewart are on USA World Cup roster. **PAGE B1**



Weather: Partly sunny and humid. High: 89. Low: 71. **Page A2**

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