

Record-Journal

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Diamantis appeals prison sentence

By Josh LaBella
STAFF WRITER

A former Connecticut official convicted of corruption — and currently on the run in Greece — has appealed a federal sentencing decision that would see him in jail for 7 years.

Filed in U.S. Court for the District of Connecticut on

Wednesday, Konstantinos “Kosta” Diamantis submitted the appeal through his attorney, Norm Pattis.

On Sept. 30, the state’s former top school construction official was sentenced to 7 years in prison after being found guilty last year of 21 felonies.

“He extorted money, he accepted bribes and lied to the FBI repeatedly,” U.S. District

Judge Stefan Underhill said during the sentencing. “He lied on the (witness) stand, in my view and he lied to the jury as well. Nobody conspired to have him commit those crimes. He breached the trust of the people. The public is jaded. Democracy depends on the faith in government.”

Prosecutors in the case said Diamantis used his position as

deputy budget director and chief of school construction funding to enrich himself.

Diamantis fled the country using his Greek passport last month before he was scheduled to be sentenced. He maintains that he is innocent, and has referred to the corruption case against him as political weaponization.

Pattis read a statement from

Diamantis in court at the sentencing hearing in which Diamantis said, “While I acknowledge the procedural finality of today’s hearing, I maintain my absolute innocence. A process that is compromised from its inception cannot yield a legitimate verdict and I refuse to validate a political exercise by pretending otherwise.”

Diamantis continues on A7



Gov. Ned Lamont, above left, and Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker speak at a press conference Oct. 7 at Frank T. Wheeler Elementary School in Plainville about new special education grant funding from the state.

Natasha Sokoloff/Hearst Connecticut Media

State considers special ed funding reform as costs continue to rise

By Natasha Sokoloff
STAFF WRITER

When it comes to money for special education, Connecticut schools have largely welcomed any and all they can get.

As the special education student population grows and the costs keep rising, districts continue to press for more funding. At the same time, state officials say they want to make sure that current investments are working and that any new funding is targeted.

“It’s not all about more; it’s about better,” Gov. Ned Lamont said at a Wednesday press conference at Frank T.

Wheeler Elementary School in Plainville.

A \$10.6 million funding boost recently awarded to 41 special education programs across the state represents a test of that approach — and whether targeted grants are enough to provide schools with the support they say they need while Connecticut considers broader reforms to education funding.

The High-Quality Special Education Incentive Grant Program, which the legislature established last year, aims to help school districts build their own special education

Special ed continues on A5



H John Voorhees III/Hearst Connecticut Media

Connecticut is testing whether targeted grants are enough to provide schools with the support they say they need as the state considers broader reforms to education funding.

DANBURY

‘White power’ rally tracked as a ‘bias incident’

Any civilized person would agree the white supremacist protest march on the streets of downtown Danbury Saturday night, a dozen or so masked men shouting “white power” and “Sieg Heil” with arms in the Hitler salute, was a reprehensible and hateful spectacle.

Hateful, yes. A hate crime? No. It was a group of people exercising their First Amendment rights, state and local criminal authorities said Monday and Tuesday.



Dan Haar
COMMENTARY



Hearst Connecticut Media file photo

A protest against hate crimes and bias incidents in Westport in 2021.

A hate crime must be a crime, first — assault, threatening or some other act that would land the alleged perpetrator in the police blotter with a free photo and maybe some lodging behind bars.

“It’s free speech, holding up a poster, holding up a banner. Even if it says something that will trigger you, it’s free speech,” Michael Bloom, hate crimes initiative coordinator for the state Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, told me.

As it happens, new data just out from DESPP shows that through the first six months of 2026, hate crime arrests in Connecticut are happening at

Haar continues on A7

3 companies stop prediction market services in CT

By Ken Dixon
STAFF WRITER

Three of the nine prediction market companies targeted last month by Gov. Ned Lamont and the Department of Consumer Protection have stopped operating their sports prediction market services in Connecticut, officials confirmed this week.

“Our actions sent a clear message,” DCP Commissioner Bryan Cafferelli said on Monday. “We will not tolerate illegal prediction market activity that preys upon the most vulnerable consumers. Three prediction market operators heard that message and are leaving our state accordingly. We are hopeful the rest will decide targeting

Connecticut consumers isn’t worth breaking the law.”

Connecticut officials had said the nine companies were violating state laws, stating that prediction markets are form of wagering. In a state that requires licenses to accept bets, wagering is limited to the casinos, the Connecticut Lottery Corp. and contractual partners. All nine

companies were issued cease-and-desist orders.

Prediction markets have exploded in popularity over the last year, allowing users to buy and sell contracts that predict the outcome of an event. That event can range from the outcome of a sporting event to the result of an election. The companies

Gambling continues on A5

WALLINGFORD

Stolen checks turned to crypto, police say

Local business owner a victim in \$34K scheme

By Bill Cummings
STAFF WRITER

WALLINGFORD — An East Granby man arrested in connection with a fraudulent check cashing scheme used an Ansonia bank, an international cryptocurrency website and a Chime account to launder and transfer illegally obtained money, according to police.

Scam continues on A7



Weather: Sunny and mild.
High: 68. Low: 48.
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