

Diamantis takes the witness stand

Former official testifies in own defense on corruption charges

By Ken Dixon, Peter Yankowski

BRIDGEPORT — Konstantinos “Kosta” Diamantis took the witness stand Thursday afternoon at his corruption trial in a high-stakes attempt to refute and cast doubt on the 21 federal charges he faces that could send him to prison for 20 years.

Diamantis testified, for networking with contractors. During the testimony, defense attorney Norman Pattis quizzed Diamantis about the ins-and-outs of the process by which school districts could obtain reimbursement from the state for construction projects.

Acranom, a masonry firm in Middlefield, or John Duffy, his former brother-in-law who was an executive at the company. Diamantis admitted he had done so, accepting payments from Duffy “five or six times,” with the amounts ranging from about \$3,000 to \$7,000. He testified to also accepting \$25,000 to \$30,000 spread over a handful of payments from Monarca. Diamantis said that payment was for

making an introduction between Acranom and another individual. “Did you at any point attempt to use your influence as a state official to get paid?” Pattis asked him. “No,” Diamantis replied. Under further direct questioning from Pattis, Diamantis recalled a Tolland school with a crumbling foundation that required an engineer with experience in the mineral



In this courtroom sketch, Kosta Diamantis, left, and defense attorney Norman Pattis stand in U.S. District Court in Bridgeport during trial on Wednesday.

Sen. Blumenthal accuses Noem of violating Hatch Act

By Jordan Nathaniel Fenster

Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., called Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem’s video being played in airports around the country “probably the most blatant violation of the Hatch Act in my experience and in recent memory” during a Wednesday interview.

propaganda tool, and I think is grounds for further action against the Secretary of Homeland Security.” The video, featuring Noem, blames congressional Democrats for the ongoing government shutdown. Airports around the country have been instructed to play the video on a continuous loop, though some, including Bradley International Airport and Westchester County Airport, have not done so.



State Sen. Jorge Cabrera speaks Wednesday afternoon at a New Haven Immigrants Coalition press conference along with local, state officials as well as pastors and organization leaders at the Keefe Community Center.

Girl likely died weeks after being pulled from school

By Lisa Backus

NEW BRITAIN — Jacqueline Torres-Garcia likely died within weeks of being withdrawn from city schools, which were provided notice that she would be homeschooled after moving to Farmington in August 2024, police and a school official said.



Courtesy of the New Britain Police Dept.

Jacqueline “Mimi” Torres-Garcia, 11, was subjected to abuse before she died sometime last fall, police in New Britain and Farmington say.

‘Chaos in our town’

Officials: ICE raids Hamden car wash taking custody of as many as eight people

By Liz Hardaway and Andreas Yilma

HAMDEN — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement raided a local car wash Wednesday morning, taking custody of as many as eight people, officials said.

dren. Officials were trying to determine where the children attend school so they could be notified. Mayor Lauren Garrett held a news conference at the Keefe Community Center Wednesday afternoon about the incident. She was joined by Hamden Town Clerk Karimah Mickens, Hamden Chief of Police Edward Page Reynolds and members of the state delegation as well as local officials and community leaders.

to contact that school. We’re still trying to find out how to get in touch with this family so that their kids don’t go to an empty house when they get off of school.” ICE officials did not immediately respond to a request for comment and information about the raid.

“So what I call on us as a community is to stand up because this is not just an immigration issue. This is a Black and a brown person issue and this is Hamden issue, this is a Connecticut issue.”

Tabitha Sookdeo, executive director, Connecticut Students for a Dream

Vince McMahon gets special probation in reckless driving case

By Ethan Fry and Pat Tomlinson

STAMFORD — A judge on Thursday granted an application from Vince McMahon, co-founder and former CEO of the WWE, for a pretrial probationary program in his reckless driving case.

nearly two months after he applied for the accelerated rehabilitation program in connection with the July 24 crash on the Merritt Parkway.

median. A Ford Fusion driving on the south side of the highway hit some debris that had been projected over the center median, and it then struck the guardrail on the northbound side.

State’s Attorney Eileen Ornousky said McMahon was driving in excess of 90 mph at the time of the crash, but did not object to the program since McMahon was fully covered by insurance.



Vince McMahon leaves state Superior Court in Stamford Thursday morning.