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THE SALEM NEWS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025SALEMNEWS.COM\$3.00

House overhauls homecare industry rules

By Christian M. Wade
» Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — Homecare workers will be required to undergo criminal background screenings and regular training under a bill approved by the state House of Representatives Wednesday as part of an overhaul of rules for the largely unregulated industry. The legislation, which passed by a vote of 153-0, will

require the state Executive Office of Health and Human Services to set up a new licensing process for homecare workers. It also gives the state agency the authority to approve licenses and investigate allegations of neglect or abuse of elders under the care of licensed homecare agencies. House Speaker Ron Mariano said the legislation “takes important steps to improve

services for seniors, and to ensure a safe work environment for homecare workers.” Under the bill, homecare agencies will be required to disclose anyone with a 5% ownership interest in the company, have workers’ compensation and liability insurance, and provide “appropriate” levels of training for employees. The bill also creates two advisory councils to come

up with recommendations on standards and procedures to “address the abusive treatment” of homecare workers, personal care attendants, and homecare consumers. “This legislation could not have been passed at a more critical time,” said state Rep. Thomas Stanley, D-Waltham, House Chair of the Joint Committee on Aging and Independence. “With our aging population expected to grow

exponentially in the coming years and the number of family caregivers shrinking, the demand for home care will subsequently increase.” Passage of the bill won praise from advocacy groups representing the elderly, disabled and home-bound individuals who depend on homecare attendants for basic needs from eating and bathing to going to the bathroom and dressing.

The bill will “implement standards that most people assume are already required,” said Jake Krilovich, executive director of the Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts. “Implementing a licensure system will ensure that every Massachusetts resident receiving care at home can do so with confidence, knowing their providers are part of a

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Masco girls soccer victorious



Masco’s Ava Wexler, Sadie Morries, Victoria Cerbone all smiles Wednesday after a 3-1 victory over Western Springfield in the Division 2 playoff game in Boxford.

JARED CHARNEY

Salem residents get gift cards to offset lost SNAP benefits

By Michael McHugh
» Staff Writer

SALEM — The city of Salem’s Food Policy Council and the Salem Children’s Alliance have partnered with the Salem YMCA to make donated grocery store gift cards available for residents who lost their SNAP benefits.

» **MSPCA bolsters pet food program during fed shutdown.**
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“Thanks to the many generous Salem residents who have already stepped up to donate grocery gift cards to support our neighbors in need during this difficult time,” Mayor Dominick Pangallo said. “Close to one in four Salem families rely on SNAP to put food on their table, and we’re coming together as a community to help them. If you need help, please reach out and call. We’re all in this together.” To be eligible, households must have lost SNAP benefits (self-reported or verified) and be a Salem resident with proof of residency such as a utility bill, drivers license, or state ID required. Eligible residents can reserve a pickup time on Thursday, Nov. 6, from 5-7 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 8, from 10-11 a.m. at the Salem YMCA at 1 Sewall St. Eligible residents should call 781-990-7071 to check current gift card availability and reserve a pickup time with staff. Reservation calls made after 11 a.m. on Friday will not be eligible for gift card pickup that week. Residents must present a valid photo ID and DTA/EBT card at time of pickup. Michael McHugh can be contacted at mmchugh@northofboston.com or at 781-799-5202

Report: Employers in dumps over shutdown fallout

By Christian M. Wade
» Statehouse Reporter

BOSTON — The prolonged federal government shutdown is bad for business, according to a new report that found rising pessimism among the state’s employers as the stalemate in Congress grinds on. The latest Business Confidence Index, which is compiled by the pro-business group Associated Industries

of Massachusetts, shows overall enthusiasm among employers slipped one point to 46.5 on a 100-point scale in October. That’s the eighth consecutive month the index fell below the 50-point mark, which is considered pessimistic territory among employers and the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the group said. It attributed weakening

confidence to employer uncertainty about a host of federal policy initiatives under the Trump administration, including the effect of the shutdown, global efforts and a pullback of federal research funding. Meanwhile, the government shutdown is “hindering” analysis of the economy as federal agencies have suspended collection and processing of most official statistics, the report’s

authors wrote. “The economy remains resilient with the Federal Reserve noting that economic activity ‘has been expanding at a moderate pace.’ At the same time, the labor market is softening — employment has decelerated, and long-term unemployment has risen,” Sara Johnson, chairwoman of AIM’s board of economic advisors, said in a statement. “Because the labor market

is a major pillar of consumer spending, any sign of widening job losses or weakening wage gains would be a red flag.” The high productivity rate that has traditionally allowed Massachusetts to increase economic output faces “challenges” from changes in federal policy, said BEA member Alan Clayton-Matthews, a professor emeritus of economics

and public policy at Northeastern University. “Tariffs and reductions in research-and-development spending create issues for productivity while an aging demographic affects labor-force participation and tightening immigration policy affects population,” he said. The report, which surveyed 140 Massachusetts

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