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THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Democrats condemn Trump's cancellation of \$1.1B in projects

BY SIMONE CARTER
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Democratic officials are condemning the Trump administration for terminating some \$1.1 billion in funding meant for energy and manufacturing projects in Washington state.

That includes \$1 billion for the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub, which was slated to extend across parts of Washington, Montana and Oregon, Bloomberg first reported. Such hubs are networks of regional hydrogen producers and consumers, plus connective infrastructure like distributors and storage facilities.

The Trump administration's move was part of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) plan to slash \$7.56 billion in funding for hundreds of energy projects nationwide. The department has argued that financing them wouldn't offer sufficient return to taxpayers.

Several other Democrat-leaning states are also seeing climate-related funds terminated, including New York and California.

The news coincides with a White House-imposed pressure campaign for Democratic members of Congress to stop the federal government shutdown. The energy cuts are part of a larger \$26 billion funding freeze announced Wednesday.

Washington Gov. Bob Ferguson said in a Thursday post on X that the Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub "will create a clean hydrogen economy across our region."

"It is outrageous that this administration is using a government shutdown to punish blue states like Washington," the Democrat continued.

"We're working with the At-

SEE DEMOCRATS, 7A

Would new city sales tax mean more police officers?

BY ROBERT MITTENDORF
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As Bellingham seeks to ease a \$10 million budget deficit with a new sales tax to boost public safety services, some critics are asking the city not to make its poorest residents pay more taxes, while others are saying that the police don't need more

money.

A new state law, HB 2015, allows local governments to impose a sales tax of one-tenth of 1% earmarked for a range of public safety purposes — including domestic violence prevention, public defenders, re-entry work for offenders and crime-reduction measures, in addition to police funding, according to previous Herald

reporting.

City Council members unanimously approved a measure authorizing the tax on Sept. 15. Before it takes effect in 2026, the tax requires a third and final vote that could come as early as Monday, Oct. 6.

Such a tax would cost Bellingham shoppers about 10 cents on a \$100 purchase. It would raise about \$3.9 million

for a range of public safety services in 2026, helping to plug an expected budget deficit of \$10 million next year, Mayor Kim Lund said at Monday's City Council meeting.

Sales and property taxes are higher in Washington because there is no state income tax. It's a regressive system, meaning

SEE SALES TAX, 3A



CHUCKANUT HEALTH FOUNDATION Provided by Chuckanut Health Foundation

Panelists answered questions about the project to build a new Whatcom County Jail at the All Hands Whatcom summit.

Exploring the intersection of addiction, mental health, justice

BY HANNAH EDELMAN
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"Your name is Leeland. You served 25 years in both state and federal prison for murder, felon in possession of a firearm and a past drug conviction."

These lines were printed on

top of one of the instruction papers for the reentry simulation hosted by Chuckanut Health Foundation as part of the two-day All Hands Whatcom summit Sept. 25-26.

"Leeland" was just one of the personas attendees were assigned to assume as they navigated an approximation of

what incarcerated individuals experience when they leave jail or prison.

Tables manned by formerly incarcerated individuals were set up around the Ferndale Event Center for the simulation. One was an ID card office; another, a transportation center, where people could use

fake money to purchase the bus tickets needed to travel between the tables. There was also the Whatcom County Jail, where some ended up returning to after "failing" a urinalysis or deciding to commit a crime to potentially earn money.

SEE SUMMIT, 3A

Judge: Denying bond hearings for some noncitizens is unlawful

BY PETER TALBOT
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A U.S. District Court judge has ruled that the Tacoma Immigration Court's practice of denying bond hearings to people who entered the United States without admission is

unlawful.

The Tuesday ruling comes after attorneys representing a class of noncitizens detained at the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma filed a class-action lawsuit in March challenging what they called a draconian interpretation of federal law that had immigration judg-

es refusing to consider releasing people on bond who had lived in the country for years.

Judge Tiffany Cartwright, whose chambers are in Tacoma, wrote in a 59-page ruling that in fiscal year 2023, Tacoma immigration judges granted bond in only 3 percent of cases where bond was request-

ed, a rate that was the lowest among immigration courts in the nation.

Over the summer, Cartwright said the government adopted the Tacoma Immigration Court's interpretation of the Immigration and Nationality Act as its new national policy, which she said meant that noncitizens who hadn't been lawfully admitted — even those with strong ties to their communities and no criminal records — weren't eligible for a

SEE JUDGE, 5A

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