

OPINION

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EDITORIAL

Deportation threat looms in schools

Maybe you believe the immigration debate has no impact on your life. Perhaps your own family's arrival in the United States is so many generations past that commonalities with new families crossing borders have become opaque.

A meeting last week between Stamford Superintendent of Schools Earl Kim and a parent group offered a lucid reminder of why this issue grips all our communities.

The group was Building One Community, a resource center for immigrants. The conversation was about how the school district responds when Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers arrive at schools to question students.

Districts may take different approaches, but the issue prevails: Concerns among immigrant families — legal and illegal — have become heightened since Election Day.

For the length of the meeting, one community's anxiety was exposed in an academic setting. Mothers spoke of fears their children could arrive to an empty home. Kim shared anecdotes about students "who have had prior trauma in their lives" becoming stressed about a perception their family is in peril.

"Even documented parents feel uncomfortable," Building One Executive Director Catalina Horak pointed out.

Such anxiety — unfair to any child — is coursing through communities across the nation like poison ivy.

These families deserve an appropriate approach from community leaders, from immigration officials, from strangers and from the president. Some campaign rhetoric about immigration sounded like a rallying cry for bullying. Illegal immigrants deserve scrutiny; they do not deserve cruelty.

President Donald Trump has reconsidered some of his campaign threats. On Thursday, his administration announced that it would retain a policy that protects from deportation immigrants who arrived as children, contradicting a pledge of last fall. This represents some 800,000 people.

In words and action, it is a show of empathy from the president. His tough talk may indeed be the reason fewer people have been caught crossing the border from Mexico, but anxiety within the walls of our classrooms is collateral damage that must not be disregarded.

For some children and families, there can only be angst because of a different policy announcement the same day. The Department of Homeland Security rescinded former President Barack Obama's order shielding undocumented immigrants from deportation if they have a child who is an American citizen. The announcement came on the 35-year anniversary of a Supreme Court ruling that ensured a public education for children regardless of their immigration status. As U.S. Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn., responded Friday, the act will tear families apart.

Our nation was overdue for immigration reform long before Trump took office. His words, though, are creating an emotional vortex for the youngest members of our communities. Our mayors, first selectmen, school leaders and state and national representatives can do more to quell fears. For every parent who boldly turns out for community discussions, there are hundreds who keep their distance.

In the absence of humane policies, we will be nothing more than a nation of immigrants in hiding.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Questions linger over Badger settlement

To the editor,
Recently it was reported in The (Stamford) Advocate that the city of Stamford settled one of the lawsuits arising out of the Badger Christmas Day fire for \$6.7 million. The article also indicated that there will be additional financial settlements regarding other lawsuits related to the same incident. The only reason Stamford is paying these sums is that the city made the determination that if these lawsuits went to trial the city could be exposed to greater financial payments.

Significant mistakes were made by certain employees of the city that resulted in the city paying

these damages. My question is did any city employees directly connected to the decisions made around this incident suffer any adverse consequences?

Ira Kaplan
Stamford

President Pobie

To the editor:
Thanks to Angela Carella for a wonderful article on Pobie Johnston (June 9, "Dahlia 'Pobie' Johnston; The woman who should have been mayor of Stamford"). Yes, Pobie should have been mayor; she should have been gover-

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY

A freewheelin' theory on Bob Dylan



The New York Times

Bob Dylan sings at the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, in 2012, when he was the first performer in the re-opened venue. His shows there last week included the 500th concert since its revival.

If you're worked up that Bob Dylan is plagiarizing again, you've missed the point he's been making for six decades.

Bob Dylan is a liar. Sure, the last time he smiled publicly was when he bantered with Watson in that IBM Super Bowl ad, but he's been laughing at us all this time. His is a life of performance art. He popped up on an episode of "Dharma and Greg." He responded to queries about his appearance in a "Victoria's Secret" commercial with the indisputable riposte: "Was I not supposed to do that?" He hosted a satellite radio show that I enjoyed as much as anything he's done, though this "Bob Dylan" was another of his many personas, sharing lengthy musings and tepid jokes. The one we see onstage virtually never speaks.

He gave fair warning. Bobby Zimmerman even swiped his name, though we'll never know for sure if it was from Dylan Thomas or "Gunsmoke" marshal Matt Dillon.

I tilt toward the latter. Maybe it's just the souvenir sheriff's badge I bought for my 5-year-old before Dylan hit the boards to open his latest tour in Port Chester's Capitol Theatre Tuesday night. The words "Deputy Marshal" sandwich "Bob Dylan Fan Club." Alas, I think the only Dylan song The Kid is familiar with is his growling grandpa rap version of the nursery rhyme "This Old Man."

In the film "Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid," Dylan plays a character with a moniker he should have been branded with at birth: "Alias."

"Who are you anyway?" James Coburn's Garrett asks him. "That's a good question," comes the wry response from Alias, aka Jack Frost, aka Lucky Wilbury.

I can't imagine trying to outdraw him in an interview. It's a waste of time seeking truth from a master of deception. But I've learned to appreciate the show.

As our greatest living songwriter, Dylan has been honored with Grammy Awards, an Oscar, a Pulitzer and now a Noble Prize for Literature (which he accepted with some language that he apparently nicked). But he's never come close to drawing the crowds of peers such as Paul McCartney or the Rolling Stones. They tend to stay in their lane. Dylan betrays his inner GPS regardless of how many times he's taken his songs for a spin.

nor; heck, she should have been president!

Especially now, as we struggle to reclaim our country from the morass we find ourselves in, we must look to the memory of people like Pobie — people with integrity, intelligence, character, and compassion — to inspire us and to remind us what citizenship truly means.

Marie Hawe
Stamford

Reject home care cuts

To the editor,

JOHN BREUNIG



Tuesday's show was worth it just for his fresh reading of "Desolation Road."

Not everyone agrees. Some can't get past his voice, which has sounded like a rusty instrument for most of his career. I've caught Dylan live every few years for the past three decades. There have been bad nights. Promoters have paired him with the likes of Tom Petty, Van Morrison or Paul Simon, drawing fans that might have otherwise stayed away. Bruce Springsteen brought him out on the final night of a 2003 tour at Shea Stadium for a roadkill version of "Highway 61 Revisited."

For a few years, Dylan sometimes seemed like he couldn't conjure a weak impersonation of himself. In January 1992, I was in the audience for a David Letterman anniversary show at Radio City Music Hall when Dylan took a detour on "Like a Rolling Stone" while accompanied by Chrissie Hynde, Carole King, Mavis Staples and others. He seemed miserable with an all-star band. When the song concluded, I was the only person in the balcony to rise.

I glowered a "Hey, show respect, it's Bob Dylan" stinkeye at those around me. Then I spotted Dylan settling in at the side of the stage with Letterman stage manager Biff Henderson. He did something I haven't seen him do before or since: He laughed. Dylan may love a knock-knock joke, but he smiles on stage as often as a cat having a bad morning.

It was around that time that we were denied a Dylan show at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park in Greenwich by local cops fretful of rowdy crowds. The audience on the floor at the Cap last week was the most polite I've seen. Warnings to holster cellphones took hold. It was a godsend after being surrounded by people staring at their glowing palms while Dylan marked the 50th anniversary of his historic set in Forest Hills last summer. These days, too many people in Dylan audiences seem to be there just to say they saw him.

That was not the case in the 1,800-capacity Cap. This crowd

was nimble, taking the ride when Dylan's voice strayed into honks (at his worst he gargles the lyrics), while appreciating the focus he summoned to deliver a haunting "Autumn Leaves."

The man who blew up the Great American Songbook in the early 1960s made his apologies by paying tribute to another iconic blue-eyed singer as he sprinkled in standards such as "Stormy Weather" and "All or Nothing at All" between "Tangled Up in Blue" and "Ballad of a Thin Man."

Watch early footage of Elvis Presley and you can see him coping moves from Dean Martin. Consider early Dino and you'll catch him crooning like his hero: Bing Crosby. I watched Dylan leave his keyboards, shuffle like a tipsy gunslinger to the faux vintage microphone and take on another guise to warble "That Old Black Magic," his pipes magically clear. Who is he emulating?

These days, Dylan's face is a weathered baseball mitt with creases in just the right spots. Sometimes he plunks a bolero hat atop his trademark curls and looks poised to ride into an auburn sunset.

He's a cowboy, a crooner, a wizard. His guitar and harmonica were absent Tuesday, which is standard these days. The next night in Port Chester, he contradicted that expectation and played guitar on "To Ramona."

He'd likely dismiss his liberties with plagiarism as being in the folk tradition. I call shenanigans. A few years ago, my wife was working for an academic publisher that produced a study of Dylan's lyrics. His manager barked that the stock image they chose for the cover was "too commercial."

So, in the folk tradition, I don't believe you Bob, you're a liar.

He wrapped his show by cloaking "Ballad of a Thin Man" in yet another disguise. The truth is still not welcome on Bob Dylan's stage.

He and his bandmates rose to glare silently into the audience. They showed off their sartorial splendor as though the encore was a fashion show, then Dylan shimmed into the sultry Port Chester night.

It was time well spent with the wily old scoundrel.

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My home is my choice. The vast majority of older adults want to live independently, at home, as they age — most with the help of unpaid family caregivers. Unfortunately, Connecticut lawmakers are considering deep budget cuts that would jeopardize seniors' preference to live independently at home.

That's because the services seniors and caregiving families rely on are under attack. When it comes to helping seniors live in the setting of their choice, family caregivers take on big responsibilities. Many juggle full-time jobs with their caregiving duties; others provide 24/7 care for their loved ones. With every task they undertake, these family caregiv-

ers save the state money by keeping their loved ones out of costly nursing homes — most often paid for by Medicaid. But, proposals to shred safe net services — such as the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and Alzheimer's respite care — will put additional pressures on families and could ultimately force seniors out of their home to get the care they need.

I hope that our elected leaders will have the courage to protect health and supportive services; lower and middle class seniors need to remain independent. Please reject home care and family respite cuts.

Malinda E. Polite
Stamford