



Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick (center) chats with school children Jonathon Turner, 11, and Ariana Gardner, 10, at John P. Holland Elementary School in Dorchester. Patrick promised \$2.8 million in state grants last Thursday for programs aimed at stemming a spate of inner-city Boston violence. (AP photo/Steven Senne)

No-trespassing policy drums up controversy

David Pomerantz

A newly proposed no-trespassing policy for the city's public housing developments is drawing condemnation from critics who say that the policy will needlessly criminalize youths and violate tenants' rights.

The controversy pits the Boston Housing Authority, which proposed the new policy for all of its properties, against juvenile and tenant rights advocates, and sets up a debate about public safety and civil rights that will culminate in an April 30 public hearing at City Hall.

At first glance, the controversial policy might not seem all that controversial.

The BHA has had a no-trespassing policy in place since 1987. The policy was enacted then to address drug dealing and other crimes, and it dictated that any non-tenant could be issued a "No-Trespassing Notice."

An individual who receives a notice and later returns to BHA property could be arrested and prosecuted in the criminal system.

The major departure from the BHA's previous policy is a new section that allows for individuals to file for an internal review of the notice with the BHA Department of Public Safety.

The BHA's chief of police, Ste-

phen Melia, would then have final say over whether or not to withdraw the notice.

In the old trespassing policy, alleged trespassers had no way of filing a grievance, but critics claim that this new process is not any better.

In fact, it's worse, since it places the BHA in the role of "judge, jury and executioner," according to Lisa Thureau-Gray of the Juvenile Justice Center at Suffolk University.

"The policy says that BHA police will be the final determiner," said Thureau-Gray, who is also a member of the board of the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts. "I'm shocked that a police authority would arrogate to itself that level of power."

"I would hope that the BHA would not have itself be the final arbiter of questions of law. That's not the role of police. It's the role of the courts."

The BHA defended the new policy.

"This policy is no more harsh than what we had before," BHA spokeswoman Lydia Agro said. "It gives people more due process than existed with the policy before, based on concerns that we heard from our residents."

The impetus for the policy change was that tenants had complained to

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Government assistance

Federal, state and city money fueled growth of raided New Bedford factory

Neal Simpson

In the early 1980s, Francesco Insolia was an Italian immigrant, a sailor of modest upbringing who followed his American sweetheart across the Atlantic to settle in Massachusetts.

Today, as the head of a multimillion-dollar corporation, Insolia stands accused of building a personal fortune on the backs of illegal immigrants willing to work for little pay under appalling conditions.

But in the month since hundreds of federal agents descended on the New Bedford factory of Michael Bianco Inc., Insolia's leather company

— arresting the owner, his office managers and 361 alleged illegal workers — it has become clear that Insolia did not build his textile empire on his own.

At every step of the way, he had the help of a key ally — the United States government. Over the last five years, Insolia's leather company has received contracts, grants and tax incentives from the federal, state and municipal government. The company received an estimated \$221 million worth of federal contracts alone.

Charged with hiring illegal aliens and encouraging them to live in the United States, Insolia and his office

managers could each face up to 10 and-a-half years in prison. Many of the workers they hired now face deportation. Insolia and the three managers are due in federal court on May 4 for a probable cause hearing.

In the meanwhile, Insolia, his company and his office managers have been listed on the government's Excluded Party List System, a database of companies barred from accepting federal contracts.

Federal prosecutors have painted Insolia as a sweatshop operator who maximized profits by imposing harsh penalties on employees who talked

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From the streets, a new leader emerges

David Cogger

His name is Truesee Allah, and as fortune would have it, he is back in his old stomping grounds, walking the streets of Roxbury and Dorchester.

But instead of revisiting his former life ripping and running with the old Castlegate crew during the crack epidemic in the 1980s, he is now working for the Suffolk County Sheriff Department as director of the Boston Re-entry Initiative, a joint venture with the Boston Police Department (BPD) designed to help ex-offenders adjust to life on the outside. He started two months ago.

Allah, 36, knows all about adjustments, transformation and, ultimately, redemption. His earlier days on the streets resulted in him serving nearly nine years in prison.

"Just hanging in the streets and using drugs and selling drugs, it's inevitable you'll get caught as I did."

— Truesee Allah

As an outreach worker, Allah today draws on his own experience. He knows firsthand that the reality of street life seldom lives up to the glamorous image often portrayed in music videos.

"Just hanging in the streets and using drugs and selling drugs, it's inevitable you'll get caught as I did," he said.

In his new role, Allah acts as point man for law enforcement officials trying to prevent people from making the mistakes he made.

"Truesee is a very smart guy who can make great contributions here," said Suffolk County Sheriff Andrea Cabral. "You can't outthink him, you can't outwork him and you definitely can't outdress him. Because he has been a gang member and served time, he has enormous credibility."

Allah also volunteers as an outreach coordinator for the Nation of Islam trying to improve the neighborhood he once menaced. His work with the Nation is "from the heart," he says, and involves looking out for at-risk youth.

He was once of them.

Like many young city boys, Allah dreamed of playing in the NBA. He idolized Muggsy Bogues, the elfin

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The Museum of Fine Arts recently purchased six works from noted jazz impresario and art collector George Wein and is exhibiting them now until August 2007. One of the works is "Tire Jumping in Front of My Window," an oil painting by Boston native Allan Rohan Crite. (Photo courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston)

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