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The Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian stands before a bust of Frederick Douglass as he delivers the keynote address at the City of Boston's commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, held Monday at Faneuil Hall. (Tony Irving photo)

Patrick pumps \$10M into eliminating homelessness

Steve LeBlanc

Gov. Deval Patrick is set to unveil a major new \$10 million push to virtually eliminate homelessness in Massachusetts in the next five years.

The goal of the initiative is to come up with better ways to detect when individuals and families are on the verge of falling into homelessness — and move in swiftly with aid and support.

Another goal is to quickly move

those already homeless into permanent housing, including an increased use of housing vouchers.

As a down payment on the plan, Patrick's proposed state budget includes \$1.75 million for MassHousing and \$8.25 million for the state Department of Housing and Urban Development, an administration source told The Associated Press last weekend prior to the formal release of the budget yesterday.

The proposed extra spending is intended to support the goals of a report released earlier this month by a special commission on homelessness.

The plan could run into opposition in the state Legislature from those who point to the state's looming \$1.3 billion revenue gap and question whether the state can afford the extra spending.

Patrick, continued to page 22

Obama, Clinton face off in bitter debate

Nedra Pickler

MYRTLE BEACH, S.C. — Democratic presidential rivals Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama accused each other of repeatedly and deliberately distorting the truth for political gain Monday night in a highly

personal, finger-wagging debate that ranged from the war in Iraq to former President Bill Clinton's role in the campaign.

Obama told the former first lady he was helping unemployed workers on the streets of Chicago when "you were a corporate lawyer sitting on

the board at Wal-Mart." Moments later, Clinton said that she was fighting against misguided Republican policies "when you were practicing law and representing your contributor ... in his slum landlord business in inner city Chicago."

Obama seemed particularly irritated at the former president, whom he accused in absentia of uttering a series of distortions to aid his wife's presidential effort.

"I'm here. He's not," she snapped.

Debate, continued to page 6

Campaign '08

Campaign operations go toe-to-toe in Mass.

Alex Bloom

The quest for the Democratic presidential nomination in Massachusetts is in full swing, with supporters for Sens. Hillary Clinton of New York and Barack Obama of Illinois already on the ground and organizing here

in Boston.

Obama already has received endorsements from Gov. Deval Patrick and Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., while Clinton has the support of Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and U.S. Reps. Barney Frank and Jim McGovern.

In Boston, the battle lines have been drawn, with local officials torn between Obama and Clinton.

State Reps. Linda Dorcena Forry and Gloria Fox, who both have endorsed Obama, expressed their support for the Illinois senator along with City Councilors Sam Yoon and Mike Ross and Diane Patrick, the governor's wife, at a gathering in Fields Corner on Monday night to watched the nationally televised Democratic debate.

Primary, continued to page 7

Crosstown Center: A work still in progress

Jin-ah Kim

Back in 2002, at an event celebrating the start of construction on the massive Crosstown Center development, Mayor Thomas M. Menino sounded bullish about the project's prospects.

"This project will be a major economic catalyst for this area and for the city as whole," said Menino. "This is an exciting milestone."

Over the past five years, Crosstown Center has fulfilled some of that potential, with its centerpiece hotel continuing its financial growth and

residents reporting improved safety in the surrounding community.

But several key contributors to Crosstown's founding admit that even five years after Menino's pronouncement, the development still has a very low public profile. Some of the center's retail proprietors say they are unable to draw enough customers to their stores to stay afloat, and that slow sales could force them to pull up stakes.

Many shared Menino's high expectations for the center, due in part to its location at the high-traffic intersection of Melnea Cass Boulevard and Massachusetts Avenue — easily accessible from I-90 or I-93, immediately adjacent to Boston Medical Center, and just a

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stone's throw from Northeastern University, the Fenway and the Longwood medical area.

The location has been a draw. Crosstown Center is now home to a 10-story, 175-room Hampton Inn & Suites hotel, which opened in June 2004; 208,000 square feet of office space, with ten-

ants now moving in; a car rental business; a spa; and several restaurants.

But Yvonne Jones, owner of the center's Halisi Day Spa & Salon, says she is concerned by the low amount of customers she has seen over the last few months. During a recent interview, there was one customer in the spa shop.

"At first, I was quite excited about Crosstown, continued to page 18



R&B legend Patti LaBelle packed the Citi Wang Theatre last Friday night as she headlined the city's 25th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration. (Tony Irving photo)

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