

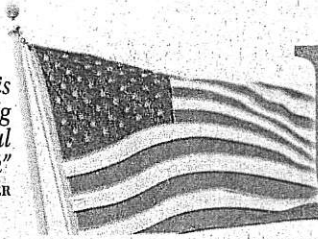
MT. WAS'INGTON
 Skier rescued after being
 injured in avalanche • A3



EMOTIONAL EXIT
 UNH soccer coach Hubbard
 headed to NC State • B1

65 YEARS LATER, NO. 1
 'Rockin' Around the
 Christmas Tree' • B10

*"There is
 nothing
 so powerful
 as truth"*
 DANIEL WEBSTER



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Monday, December 11, 2023

Vol. 161, No. 215 • 20 Pages

CONCORD

*** In wake of sign-removal flap, formal rules proposed**

■ Canterbury resident wants Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to adopt laws after political pressure resulted in removal of highway marker honoring Communist labor activist.

By **Jamie L. Costa**
 Union Leader Staff

Canterbury resident and longtime activist Arnie Alpert has proposed a formal set of rules for the Department of Natural and Cul-

tural Resources (DNCR) to adopt after they allegedly violated their own policies in removing historical signage over political controversy.

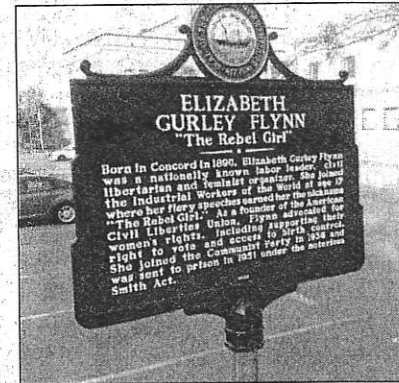
On May 1, a historical marker honoring Elizabeth

Gurley Flynn, a labor activist and member of the Communist Party later in life, was installed at the corner of Court and Montgomery streets in downtown Concord near the site of her birthplace. By May 15, the

marker was removed after Gov. Chris Sununu and members of the Executive Council protested Gurley Flynn's Communist affiliation.

"In the process of successfully proposing a historical marker only to have it removed two weeks after its official dedication, I have

▶ See Sign, Page A10



A lawsuit is asking a judge to order that this historical marker honoring the life of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a Concord native and labor leader who had been a member of the Communist Party of America, be put back up.

UNION LEADER FILE

Happy Hanukkah: 'Increase the light every day'



PORTSMOUTH

**Nightclub to
 pay \$500 fine
 for serving**

Sign

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become aware that the Historical Highway Marker Program has been operating without any formally adopted rules," Alpert wrote in his proposal to DNCR Commissioner Sarah Stewart. "Since the program's operation without any existing rules makes it vulnerable to political and ideological whims of elected and appointed officials which may be at odds with the program's purpose, I hereby petition the Department of Cultural and Natural Resources to commence a rulemaking proceeding."

Alpert addressed his proposal to Commissioner Stewart and recommended the DNCR adopt a set of rules to govern the Historical Highway Marker Program. The state started marking sites of historical importance in 1958.

"These rules will address not only the erection of new markers, but also revisions and the possible permanent retirement of markers," Alpert wrote.

His proposed rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Any municipality, agency, organization or individual can propose a marker significant to state places, people or events.

- Nominations must be evaluated based on historical significance and submitted with thorough and reliable documentation. The nominated subject must have a substantial connection to the state and must be dead at least five years. Places of worship and cemeteries will generally not be approved.

- The application must include a cover letter explaining the marker's proposal, with footnotes and bibliography that demonstrates the historical significance; draft marker text that clearly explains why the subject is significant to the state, with footnote citations; copies of supporting documentation; a suggested location for the marker; a petition to support the marker.

- Markers can be retired if they have significant errors of fact, if they are damaged/deteriorated/illegible/unstable/unsafe and if they lack historical context.

Alpert had not received a response from the DNCR as of Sunday evening.

In August, local activists Alpert and Mary Lee Sargent, who advocated for the Gurley Flynn sign installation, filed a lawsuit against the state accusing key figures, including Sununu, Executive Councilor Joe Kenney, Commissioner Stewart and Department of Transportation Commissioner William Cass, of overstepping their authority. The suit argues state officials didn't follow their own rules and removed the marker following criticism from Sununu and members of the Executive Council.

The lawsuit states that, in response to their protest, state officials changed the program's rules without proper notice and that Commissioner



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Activists are asking a judge to order a historical marker honoring Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, a labor and American Communist Party leader, be put back up. Flynn is shown here in an undated photograph.

Stewart failed to consult with the state of Historical Resources Council as required under state law. The complaint also said nothing in the law or historical marker rules permits them to be removed "on grounds of political or personal ideology."

In response to the lawsuit, Attorney General John Formella on behalf of the DNCR said the lawsuit should be dismissed because it lacks legal standing, Alpert said. A hearing has not yet been scheduled at Merrimack County Superior Court, where the case will be heard.

Marker noted contributions

The marker for Gurley Flynn noted her contributions to labor activism, women's rights and her involvement with the Communist Party. Born in 1890 in Concord, Gurley Flynn became a prominent labor leader, feminist organizer and a founder of the American Civil Liberties Union.

She later moved to Manchester where she saw the poverty of mill workers firsthand and was inspired to join more than 14,000 laborists on a strike in Lawrence, Mass., which resulted in raised wages for more than 250,000 mill workers throughout New England.

She was seen as a hero of the organized labor movement and for nearly 60 years, she spearheaded rebellions from Midwest mining towns to East Coast textile mills. In 1936, she joined the Communist Party and was sent to prison in 1951 under the Smith Act, formerly the Alien Registration Act of 1940, which made it a criminal offense to advocate for the violent overthrow of the government. After World War II, the statute was used against leaders of the American Communist Party.

Gurley Flynn died in Moscow, Russia, in 1964 while writing her biography.

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From Page A1

es not lead to such severe consequences for the civilian population."

srael's fight spreads into Syria and poisons ties with Russia

The Kremlin and Israel are also operating less over their military activities in Syria, where Israel is stepping up strikes against n-supported militias moving close to the Israeli border.

Putin's partnership with Iran, a country committed to Israel's destruction — has deepened since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022 and became the subject of a mass of U.S. and European sanctions.

Moscow regularly uses Iranian-made drones in Ukraine, according to the White House.

Earlier on Sunday, Netanyahu said he'd spoken with both German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron this weekend, and pushed back against their calls for a de-escalation in Gaza.

"I told them that it is impossible to support the elimination of Hamas on the one hand, while on the other pressing us to end the war, which would prevent the continuation of Hamas," Netanyahu said.

Scholz's office said the German leader had emphasized the need to protect civilians, improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza and prevent the conflict from spilling to other parts of the Middle East.

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... at the top of the Porsche Macan he was had sought a consecutive was visibly intoxicated at sion's hearing on Nov. 15. driving with five passengers 10-day suspension for serv- the bar that night. At one "No matter what I decide