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Forecast, F8

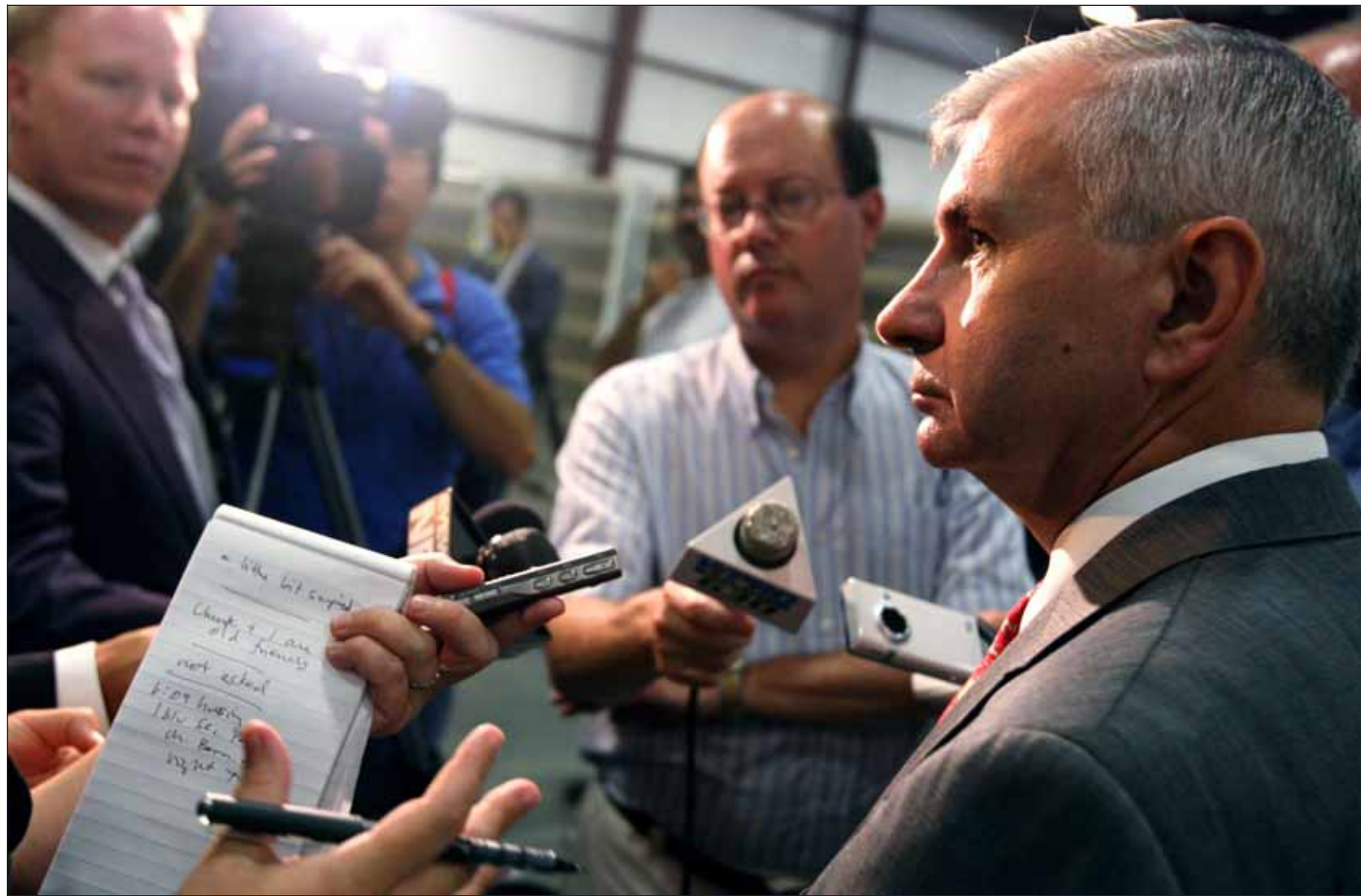
The Providence Journal

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Obama's position on Iraq under scrutiny



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / FRIEDA SQUIRES

Sen. Jack Reed, with reporters yesterday at an East Providence defense contracting company, says he and Sen. Barack Obama are "not very far apart" on the Democratic presidential candidate's 16-month troop withdrawal plan for Iraq.

War's back on center stage

As Sen. Barack Obama prepares to travel to Iraq with Sen. Jack Reed, Republicans question whether the Democratic candidate has softened his stance on a troop withdrawal.

BY JOHN E. MULLIGAN
JOURNAL WASHINGTON BUREAU

WASHINGTON — As he prepares for his first trip to Iraq as a Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. Barack Obama is defending his 16-month timetable for pulling out U.S. combat forces, reasoning in part that it will permit a shift of troops to Afghanistan, which he depicted yesterday as the proper focus of the nation's counterterrorism efforts.

But Obama's upcoming foreign tour and a war policy essay in *The New York Times* have also drawn attention to his stance on Iraq, with a top Senate ally of Republican presidential candidate John McCain, Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., calling it an "unbelievable, brazen attempt by a politician to rewrite history."

SEE **OBAMA, A5**



AP / ALEX BRANDON

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama in a published essay yesterday reiterated his belief in a 16-month withdrawal plan but appeared to leave room for revisions after consultations with commanders.

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Extra: For our multimedia special report on Sen. Jack Reed, A Humble Path to Power, go to projo.com



AP / MARK SCHIEFELBEIN

Republican presidential candidate Sen. John McCain has long opposed timetables for troop withdrawals and has expressed support for an open-ended commitment of troops to Iraq, if necessary.

Concerns rattling financial industry

With talk of bank failures and mortgage company bailouts, investors and consumers look to safeguard their money.

BY LOUISE STORY and ERIC DASH
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Even as the Bush administration moved to rescue the nation's two largest mortgage companies, confidence in the banking sector spiraled downward yesterday.

In Southern California, lines snaked around branches of IndyMac Bancorp, the large lender seized by federal regulators on Friday, while customers hurried to withdraw their money. As the anxiety spread through the financial markets, two other big banks, one in Ohio and another in Washington state, were compelled to assert that they were sound.

And for Rhode Islanders, with the state's credit-union crisis still fresh in the minds of many people, talk of such financial uncertainty is sure to be unnerving.

Despite assurances issued by federal regulators that depositors' savings were safe, Wall Street analysts circulated lists of lenders that might be vulnerable. Shares of regional banks plunged in one of the sharpest de-

SEE **ECONOMY, A5**

Heating oil prices at record high

BY TIMOTHY C. BARMANN
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

The price of home heating oil in Rhode Island set a new high yesterday, yet another indication that heating costs this coming winter will be painfully expensive.

The average price was \$4.749 a gallon, the highest price ever recorded by the state Office of Energy Resources. The agency surveys local dealers each week to determine an average price in the state.

That average is up 3 cents from last week and up \$2.10 a gallon, or 79 percent, from one year ago.

While demand for heating oil is at its lowest point of the year during the summer, now is the time that many oil customers shop around to lock in a price for the winter.

Of the 8 million households in the United States that

President Bush lifts executive order banning offshore oil drilling. **A5**

SEE **HEATING, A7**

Attorney general sues Cranston over records

BY DAVID SCHARFENBERG
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Attorney General Patrick C. Lynch sued the City of Cranston yesterday for "willfully and knowingly" violating the state's public records law.

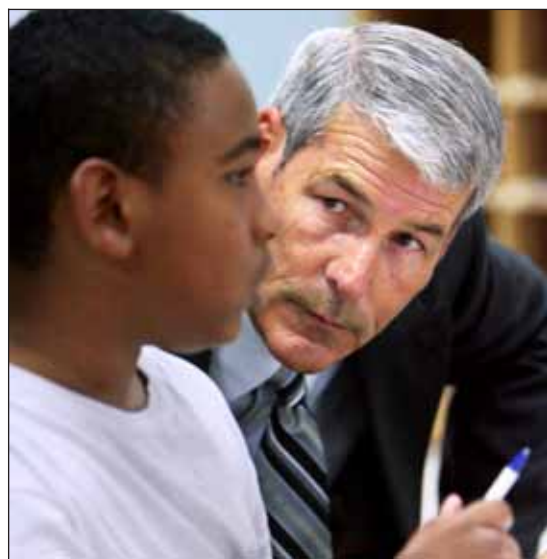
The complaint, filed in Superior Court, alleges the city dragged its feet for months before providing John Bina, a radio disc jockey, with records he requested.

Bina, now a candidate for City Council, asked for information on long-distance phone calls from City Hall and renovations to the mayor's office, among other matters.

The delays came as another Cranston resident, Alex Hofstetter, waited months for the city to provide a list of municipal employees and their hometowns.

Michael W. Field, a special assistant attorney general who is chief of the office's open government unit, said

SEE **CRANSTON, A7**



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / ANDREW DICKERMAN

Thomas Brady, who becomes superintendent next month, speaks with a summer school student at Woods-Young Elementary School.

Getting the lay of the land

Providence's next school chief makes a visit

BY LINDA BORG
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — "Hey, you look like Tom Brady," a sixth grader said, his eyes wide.

"Nice to meet you," said a tall, gray-haired man in a similarly colored suit and tie. "I'm the new superintendent."

"I thought you were Tom Brady," the boy said, crestfallen.

"I am, but I never played quarterback."

"Awesome," the boy said, smiling.

That's how the day went for Thomas M. Brady, retired Army colonel, father of five

and the incoming superintendent of the city's 23,800-pupil school district. On his first day in Providence, Brady visited a couple of schools, met in small groups with teachers and central office staff and tried to get a feel for his new

assignment.

Brady, 57, arrives here with an impressive

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Video: To watch as new Providence School Supt. Tom Brady meets teachers and students, go to projo.com

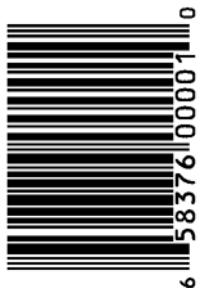
resumé: a 25-year career in the Army; interim superintendent of Philadelphia, the eighth-largest school district in the nation; and, before that, chief operating officer of the

Washington, D.C., district.

As Brady told teachers yesterday, "I know how to spell urban."

Mayor David N. Cicilline recruited Brady in

SEE **BRADY, A7**



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COPING WITH THE CREDIT CRISIS

First they saw the adjustable rate on their mortgage climb, then they watched interest rates soar on their credit cards. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse hears firsthand how Rhode Islanders are being affected by the growing credit crisis. **E1**

THIS BUD'S FOR BELGIUM

Anheuser-Busch, the nation's largest brewer, agrees to a \$52-billion takeover bid from InBev SA, a Belgium beer maker, in a deal that will create the world's largest brewer. **E1**



ARRESTING A PRESIDENT

Prosecutors with the International Criminal Court seek an arrest warrant for Sudan's President Omar al-Bashir, accusing him of waging a campaign of genocide and rape against the people of Darfur. **A2**