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**Notes from editor (not for publication):**

Congratulations on your graduation! This is beautifully written. I'd love to meet you one of these days. —All the best, Jeff



HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

1 Angela Lawrence, high bailiff

####END HED####

####BEGIN SUBHED####

2 'Every elected official, especially in law enforcement,  
3 requires oversight. The high bailiff exists solely to act as a check  
4 and balance to the position of sheriff.'

####END SUBHED####

5 TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

6 AS WE CONTINUE to celebrate Black History Month,  
7 honoring the history and contributions of the Black communities,  
8 let's together let's celebrate the beauty of diversity and honor the  
9 richness of Black heritage. Let's empower Black voices and create  
10 a world where everyone feels valued and respected.

11 As we face the coming election here in Vermont, with  
12 the primary election just six months away, the weight of the  
13 current political moment is heavy. The national landscape  
14 reminds us why local checks and balances are not just  
15 bureaucratic details — they are essential safeguards for our civil  
16 liberties.

17 As I sit on my bedroom floor, studying to prepare myself  
18 for the bar exam and my future as a prosecutor, I find myself  
19 deeply worried about the state of our democracy. We are  
20 watching an administration tear families apart, splitting children  
21 from their parents in a way that is profoundly disheartening.

22 This hits home for me because of how far I have come.

23 I immigrated to this country 24 years ago with my  
24 parents and siblings. After nine years of navigating a grueling and  
25 long process, I finally became a U.S. citizen.

26 I went through that journey because I believed in this  
27 country and what it stands for — the promise of liberty and the  
28 protection of law. As a veteran, I am proud to have had the  
29 opportunity to serve this country as a U.S. Marine and to have  
30 recently graduated from Boston University School of Law.

31 \* \* \*

32 TODAY, MANY Americans are living in fear. We are seeing  
33 our constitutional rights stripped away by agencies that operate  
34 without enough local oversight.

35 The general and midterm elections are nine months  
36 away, marking the most critical turning point for the next several  
37 years. We must decide if we will sit by and watch our democracy  
38 erode or if we will stand up to ensure that the people remain the  
39 ultimate check on power.

40 We are currently seeing the consequences of unchecked  
41 “security” operations in the Twin Cities. Under Operation Metro  
42 Surge, thousands of armed and masked federal agents have  
43 initiated militarized raids in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. This has  
44 led to systematic Fourth Amendment violations of warrantless

45 entries and illegal stops in sensitive public places like schools  
46 and hospitals.

47 Excessive and lethal force — including the tragic fatal  
48 shootings of U.S citizens Renée Good on Jan. 7 and Alex Pretti  
49 on Jan 24 by federal agents — highlights a total lack of federal  
50 accountability. Militarized “surge” tactics deployed  
51 approximately 3,000 agents (a number exceeding the size of  
52 local police forces) to carry out what has been described as a  
53 federal invasion.

54 \* \* \*

55 TWO YEARS AGO, I was re-elected as your high bailiff in  
56 Windham County for my second term. I ran on the belief that  
57 every elected official, especially in law enforcement, requires  
58 oversight.

59 The high bailiff exists solely to act as a check and  
60 balance to the position of sheriff. As my colleague, Addison  
61 County High Bailiff David Silberman, perfectly captured: “By  
62 selecting a civilian high bailiff, we prevent the inherent and  
63 dangerous conflict of interest present when we cede oversight of  
64 the law enforcement community to the law enforcement  
65 community itself.”

66 When the federal government ignores basic  
67 constitutional protections, local officials must fill that gap. In  
68 Windham County, the high bailiff is that gap-filler to the office of  
69 the sheriff.

70 My work on the Windham County Sheriff’s Advisory  
71 civilian panel and my efforts to bring community perspective into  
72 policy are designed to ensure that the blind spots of law  
73 enforcement are never ignored.

74 \* \* \*

75 BEYOND MY WORK in oversight, I remained committed to  
76 the progress we have made together.

77 I am proud to have been part of the panelist at the 2025  
78 Health Equity Summit, discussing the importance of Black  
79 maternal mental health and restoring the feeling of mothers being

80 cared for. I was joined by State Rep. Saudia LaMont of Lamoille  
81 County and three powerful Black mothers, daughters, and  
82 advocates.

83 In April 2025, I was present in the State House to witness  
84 the passage of Resolution R-134, which designated April 2025 as  
85 Black Maternal Care Awareness Month. Furthermore, I  
86 participated in No Kings protests in June and October of 2025 to  
87 oppose authoritarian power grabs and defend democratic  
88 institutions by rallying against the current administration policies.

89 \* \* \*

90 MY GOAL IS to continue serving as high bailiff and, soon,  
91 as a prosecutor who understands both the power of the law and  
92 the necessity of restraining it.

93 My mission is to ensure that our justice system exists  
94 fairly and equitably for all Vermonters, regardless of race, gender  
95 or status.

96 I am asking the constituents of Windham County to re-  
97 elect me for my third term. Let's continue to ensure that our law  
98 enforcement remains accountable to the people they serve.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

####BEGIN BIO/COATTAIL####

99 **ANGELA LAWRENCE** was elected high bailiff for  
100 Windham County in 2022.

####END BIO/COATTAIL####

LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

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LINKS:

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###END LINKS###

VIDEO:

###BEGIN VIDEO###

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###END VIDEO###

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

###BEGIN LOGLINE###

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