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Email said prison fix 'not so urgent'

AG OFFICE'S 2012 MESSAGE OVER INMATES FREED EARLY

Advice to DOC: Wait for software to recheck sentences

By JOSEPH O'SULLIVAN
Seattle Times Olympia bureau

OLYMPIA — The state Attorney General's Office knew in 2012 that hundreds of prisoners were being released early by mistake, but

advised that the problem was not urgent enough to require extra staff to accurately recalculate prison sentences.

Gov. Jay Inslee and state Department of Corrections (DOC) Secretary

Dan Pacholke announced last week that since 2002, up to 3,200 prisoners have been released early due to a miscalculation of their sentences.

The DOC became aware of the problem in 2012 and at the time prepared a software fix.

But in a Dec. 7, 2012, email to DOC records-program administra-

tor Wendy Stigall, Assistant Attorney General Ronda Larson wrote the problem was "not so urgent" as to require Corrections staff to recalculate sentences and stop more inmates from being freed early.

In the email, Larson wrote, "It would be reasonable to not manually fix the hundreds of sentences ... and instead wait for the repro-

gramming" of the software.

Doing so would "result in offenders being released earlier than the law allows for the time being," she wrote. But, given that the problem had been occurring for a decade, "a few more months is not going to make that much difference ..."

Larson wrote.

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Climate of fear frames reaction to teen's death

The swift and fierce reaction to the death of Hamza Warsame, 16, attests to uneasy emotions of local Muslims. Even amid a flurry of hate crimes, some Muslims feel more support than ever before.



Hamza Warsame

Bill Cosby is charged with sex assault in 2004 case

By SYDNEY EMBER AND GRAHAM BOWLEY
The New York Times

Bill Cosby, who has for decades been pursued by allegations of sexual misconduct, was charged with sexual assault in Pennsylvania on Wednesday in a case that many people, including women who had come forward publicly, long thought prosecutors would never bring.

The criminal charges stem from a woman's accusation that he drugged and sexually abused her at his home in a suburb north of Philadelphia in 2004.

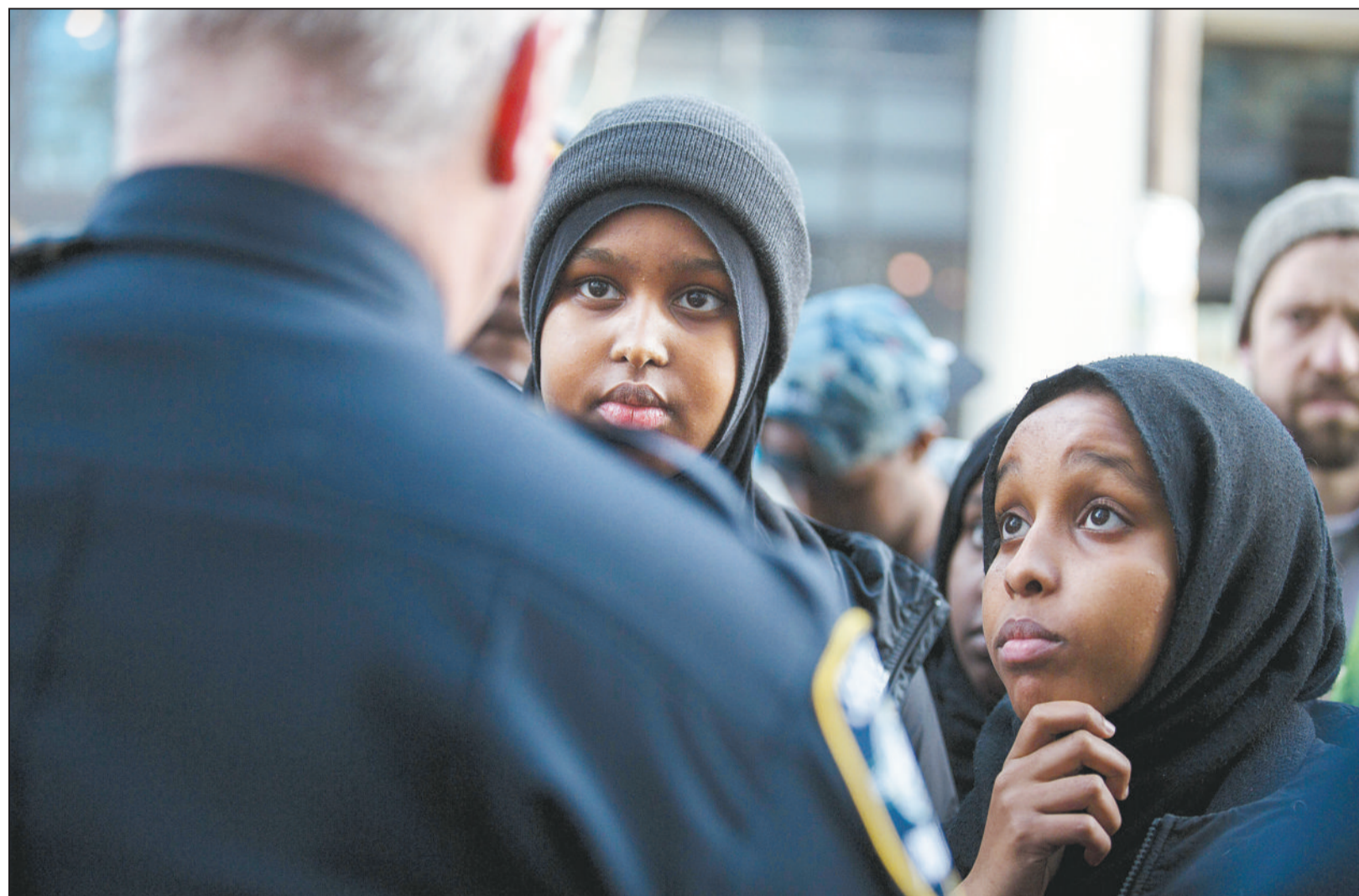
Kevin Steele, the Montgomery County district attorney-elect, said Cosby faces felony charges of aggravated indecent assault. He said the investigation involved a "relationship" between Cosby and the woman, Andrea Constand, that came about from her work with the basketball team at Temple University, Cosby's alma mater.

Cosby became a "mentor" and "friend" to Constand, Steele said, and at one point she went to his home in Cheltenham Township.

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Bill Cosby



RUTH FREMSON / THE NEW YORK TIMES FILE

A police officer speaks to Ikram Warsame, center, at a Dec. 9 protest in Seattle. Her brother Hamza Warsame, 16, died in a fall this month, and her family is waiting to hear from police exactly what happened. She has asked for people to stop the speculation about her brother's death.

By NINA SHAPIRO
Seattle Times staff reporter

Ikram Warsame seems as frustrated as anyone that it became accepted as fact that her 16-year-old brother was beaten and pushed off a Capitol Hill roof in a fit of anti-Muslim violence.

"We never said that," said the 18-year-old University of Washington student.

The only thing she said she's been certain about is that the brother who followed in her footsteps, taking classes at Seattle Central College while still at Rainier Beach High School, did not commit suicide when he suffered a fatal fall Dec. 5. She, her Somali-immigrant parents and her three surviving brothers and sisters are waiting to hear from police exactly what happened, and if it may have just been an accident. "I'm just asking everyone to stop the speculation," she added.

But the case has taken on a life of its own, prompting a Twitter feed full of outrage, using the hashtag #Justice4Hamza, stories in The New York Times and Los Angeles Times and a call from Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant to combat Islamophobia.

The swift and fierce reaction attests to the uneasy emotions felt by many local Muslims amid hostile rhetoric from politicians such as Donald Trump and a flurry of anti-Islamic incidents nationwide sparked by extremist violence around the world. The Washington state chapter of the



ERIKA SCHULTZ / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Abdulkadir "Jangeli" Aden Mohamud and his wife, Hamdi Abdulle, executive director of the Somali Youth & Family Club. She says she has at times felt intimidated as a Muslim.

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) says it has received reports of more than 30 apparent hate crimes against Muslims this year.

With little concrete information to go on, some assumed the worst when it came to Hamza Warsame, which only added to the climate of fear and anxiety.

"It makes people freaked out," said

Michaela Corning, a convert to Islam. "A lot of us feel like we have to be on extra guard." Muslim women wearing a headscarf or hijab feel particularly vulnerable, she said, and so some have taken to wearing a hat and turtleneck instead.

At the same time, she and other local Muslims say they have noticed people going out of their way to show

See > MUSLIMS, A8

“There is quite a lot of fear. There is no doubt about it.”

HAMDI ABDULLE
Executive director of the Somali Youth & Family Club in Renton

Brazilians fear virus behind brain damage in infants

By SIMON ROMERO
The New York Times

SÃO PAULO — A little-known virus spread by mosquitoes is causing one of the most alarming health crises to hit Brazil in decades, officials here warn: thousands of cases of brain damage, in which babies are born with unusually small heads.

Many pregnant women across Brazil are in a panic. The government, under withering criticism for not acting sooner, is urging them to take every precaution to avoid mosquito bites. One official even suggested that women living in areas where mosquitoes are especially prevalent postpone having children.

"If she can wait, then she should," said Claudio Maierovitch, director of the department of surveillance of communicable diseases at Brazil's health ministry.

The alarm stems from a huge surge in babies with microcephaly (my-kroh-SEF-uh-lee), a rare, incurable condition in which their

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