

The Boston Globe

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\$9m footbridge seen in light of \$2.7m in cuts for homeless

I CAN'T be the only one struck by the juxtaposition of these two headlines on Saturday's front page: "[For the Krafts' Patriot Place, a golden gateway: \\$9m in stimulus funds urged for footbridge over Route 1](#)" and "[Budget trims lead homeless shelters across Mass. to cut services and beds.](#)"

This bridge would be built for someone who is tied for 468th richest man in the world, and a host of road rebuilding projects statewide were bypassed to put it near the top of the state's priority list.

By contrast, as a result of \$2.7 million in state budget cuts, dozens of homeless people on Cape Cod will spend their days wandering in the cold, and another shelter in Western Massachusetts will lose its security detail.

The shelter where I volunteer (Housing Families Inc.) scrambles to afford tutoring supplies for its children, or even gas for the van that ferries the children between their schools and after-school tutoring.

What's wrong with this picture?

Rosemary Putnam, Cambridge

WHY AM I not surprised? Robert Kraft, owner of the New England Patriots, would get federal stimulus money (as if he hasn't enough), while the homeless wander the streets.

One can still hear Billie Holliday's sad and wistful voice: "Them that's got shall get/Them that's not shall lose/So the Bible said and it still is news." Nothing changes, and we learn nothing.

Caroline Mazzanovich Holliston

IF THEY build a footbridge over Route 1 to Gillette Stadium and Patriot Place, hopefully all those who access it will be charged a hefty user fee that can, in turn, help restore the 500 beds for the homeless in Massachusetts that are estimated to be lost as a result of budget cuts.

Kathleen M. Daly, Wellesley

THE PATRICK administration seems to have no sense of shame or irony. In the same edition of the Globe (Page A1, Nov. 7), we learn that, while insisting that it is necessary to slash programs that serve the homeless, his administration has targeted \$9 million in federal stimulus money to build a footbridge connecting parking lots and Gillette Stadium in Foxboro.

Public skepticism about government is only inflamed, if not justified, when public officials use tax dollars in this ludicrous manner. While the poor and homeless are told that they have to make their so-called fair share of sacrifices to help deal with a revenue crisis, Bob Kraft and the Patriots would get a \$9 million helping hand.

Hopefully, the agencies that will review this project will use better judgment and make sure stimulus money gets directed in a more appropriate manner.

Jim Stewart, Director First Church Shelter Cambridge