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# TIMES UNION

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## Democrats in Legislature face primaries

By Dan Clark  
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — All seats in the state Legislature are up for election this year and many incumbent lawmakers are facing serious challenges as they seek to keep their seats.

Democrats hold a broad majority in both the state Senate and Assembly and are unlikely to lose that control in November.

But in several of the races, moderate Democrats are facing primary challengers from more progressive can-

didates who view the incumbents as aligned more with their party's establishment than the communities they represent.

There are also multiple seats being vacated by Democrats retiring from the state Legislature, including former Assembly Minority Leader Will Barclay, Deputy Senate Majority Leader Mike Gianaris and Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes.

Here are 14 races in the state Senate and Assembly to watch in this month's primaries. See **PRIMARIES, A3**



Will Waldron/Times Union

Democrats hold a broad majority in the Assembly and are unlikely to lose that control in November.

## Court OKs judicial age cap

Maintains retirement at 70 despite change to N.Y. state constitution

By Dan Clark  
STAFF WRITER

ALBANY — The state's highest court has rejected a challenge to New York's 157-year-old requirement that judges retire at the end of the year they turn age 70.

In a 13-page decision released Thursday, the majority of the court determined that the cap was not impacted by a recently approved amendment to the state constitution. It was a "per curiam" decision, the legal term for an opinion authored by the court as a collective as opposed to one written by a specific judge.

That constitutional change in question, approved by voters in 2024, added several new factors to the state constitution's prohibitions on discrimination. One of them was age, meaning the document now explicitly prohibits discrimination based on how old someone is.

Three state Supreme Court justices sued the state after the amendment's approval, arguing that it invalidated the state's mandatory retirement age for judges.

Those justices were being forced to retire because of their age. There is an option for judges to remain on the bench for a few more years if they're certified by state court officials, but the plaintiffs were seeking to have the age cap overturned altogether.

The mandatory retirement age, however, is also part of the state constitution, creating a conflict that was resolved Thursday by the Court of Appeals.

The new amendment, the court's judges ruled, does not eliminate the pre-existing age cap in the state constitution.

"The retirement age is part of New York's constitutional design," the decision said. "The state's voters, Legislature, members of the bench, and judicial candidates have understood that judicial service is limited in this specific way."

The Court of Appeals' Chief Judge Rowan Wilson and Judge Madeline Singas did not take part in the decision.

The three judges that challenged the age cap were represented by John M. Leventhal, a retired associate justice of the Appellate Division, Second Department.

"My clients and I are disappointed in the decision of the Court of Appeals, although as my clients are judges and former judges, and I'm a former judge, we respect the decision of the court," Leventhal said when reached by phone Thursday.

It's the second blow to opponents of the age cap in the past two decades: Voters rejected an amendment in 2013 that would have raised the mandatory retirement age to 80.



Leo Correa/Associated Press

Smoke rises in an area near Beaufort Castle following an Israeli military strike in southern Lebanon on Friday. Neither Israel nor Iran-backed Hezbollah have confirmed a truce, although officials have reported one. An interim peace agreement in the U.S.-Iran war hangs in the balance.

## Israel, Hezbollah agree to halt fighting

Truce announced by U.S., regional officials, but the two parties have not confirmed

By Erin Cunningham, Jon Gambrell and Aamer Madhani  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Israel and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah militant group agreed Friday to halt the heavy fighting in southern Lebanon that had threatened to unravel an interim agreement between the United States and Iran to end their war, officials said. Neither Israel nor Hezbollah immediately confirmed the truce.

It came after a heavy exchange of fire killed 47 people in Lebanon and four Israeli soldiers.

See **TRUCE, A7**



Hassan Ammar/AP

A girl looks toward what residents said was an Israeli drone flying overhead as a boy checks his family's water storage tank in Halta, southern Lebanon, on June 12.

## Unhappy result at brewpubs for some with Happy Cards

By Steve Barnes  
STAFF WRITER

TROY — As a fan of locally made beer, Tia Felock was delighted by a birthday gift this spring of a prepaid card purporting to be associated with the Capital Craft Beverage Trail and seven area brewpubs.

And then she tried to use it at Brown's Brewing, one of the businesses shown on the face of the \$50 card. When it was refused, Felock recalled having the same trouble last year at Druthers Brewing, also listed on the card, with another prepaid card from the same issuer. As compensation, said Felock, who

lives in the Collar City, Druthers gave her one of its own gift cards, valued at \$25.

At both brewpubs, she was told, "Our system can't process the cards." Further, she said in a phone interview, the businesses told her they had not given permission for their logos to be used nor asked if they wished to



Courtesy of Tia Felock

Prepaid credit cards, left, produced by Happy Cards used the names and logos of the Capital Craft Beverage Trail without permission.

be included. Nor had the Capital Craft Beverage Trail. It demanded that the issuer — Happy

See **HAPPY CARDS, A3**

