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ReliaQuest Bowl predictions

SPORTS, 1B



The Daily News Journal



Nashville chef's cookbook goes viral

LIFESTYLES, 6A

Walley proposes new tax on EVs

Vivian Jones

Nashville Tennessean
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Drivers of fully electric vehicles already pay twice as much in Tennessee vehicle registration fees as drivers of hybrid and combustion engine vehicles.

Now one Republican wants to impose a new excise tax on power dispensed at EV charging stations — similar to the state's gas tax.

Lawmakers already raised vehicle registration fees for all-electric vehicle drivers in the Transportation Modernization Act of 2023. EV registration fees increased to \$200 on Jan. 1, 2024, and will jump to \$274 on Jan. 1, 2027. Fees for hybrid drivers increased to \$100.

At the time, lawmakers justified disproportionate fees on all-electric vehicles by arguing fully electric drivers paid no gas tax and therefore did not contribute to road maintenance.

Sen. Page Walley, R-Savannah, is proposing that Tennessee charge a 3-cent per kilowatt-hour excise tax on electric vehicle power sold at EV charging stations.

“Tennessee's roads — especially in our rural counties — are in serious need of repair, and the state is facing roughly \$30 billion in deferred maintenance,” Walley told The Tennessean in a statement.

See TAX, Page 2A

‘Always move forward’



Belmont University College of Law Dean Alberto Gonzales, seen here Dec. 16 at the school, will stepping down from his position on May 31 after 12 years of service at the Nashville school. He plans to remain in the area. MARK ZALESKI/THE TENNESSEAN

Alberto Gonzales, former US attorney general, to retire from Belmont

Stuart Dyos Nashville Tennessean | USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Alberto Gonzales has been in secure bunkers and West Wing offices, but these days, the room that matters most to him is a classroom at Belmont University. • After more than a decade at the school and nearly 10 years as dean of Belmont University's College of Law in Nashville, the former U.S. Attorney General is stepping down. • Gonzales will retire from his role at the end of the academic year, closing a chapter that he said has been as meaningful as his time in Washington.

See GONZALES, Page 3A

Note to readers

We will not be printing a paper on Thursday, Jan. 1, but will be providing it to you via the eNewspaper. You can always find the latest news on our website, mobile app, newsletters and social media. Subscribers can access the eNewspaper by going to our website and clicking on eNewspaper in the black navigation bar.

New state laws for 2026 range from cannabis to immigration

Vivian Jones

Nashville Tennessean
USA TODAY NETWORK – TENNESSEE

Several new state laws will take effect Jan. 1, including new age restrictions and taxes on hemp derived cannabis products, new visual distinctions between noncitizen drivers' licenses, and a requirement for new drivers to learn cyclist hand signals.

Here are a few of the laws that will become effective on Jan. 1:

Hemp-derived cannabis age restricted to 21+, new taxes, THCA banned

Tennessee's \$1.8 billion hemp industry will see an overhaul including new age limits, taxes, restrictions on sales and an effective ban on THCA products.

Producers have described the wave of new regulations as a significant blow.

Hemp-derived cannabis product sales will be age restricted to consumers 21 and older.

Online sale, shipping and delivery will be banned. Sales of hemp-derived cannabinoid products will be required to be face-to-face at licensed, age restricted retail stores like liquor stores or vape shops.

Consumers will have to pay a new two-cent per milligram wholesale tax on cannabinoid products, a \$50 per ounce tax on flower, and a tax on liquid HDCP's at wholesale of \$4.40 per gallon. New taxes are projected to generate \$126 million in revenue per year for the state, 80% of which will go to the state's general fund.

See LAWS, Page 5A

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