

The Free Lance-Star

Babcock's new vision

Virginia Tech athletic director details plan for football program. **SPORTS, PAGE B1**



Gochujang it

Make a spicy-sweet stir-fry in 30 minutes. **FOOD, PAGE C1**



Wednesday, September 17, 2025

WHERE **YOUR STORY** LIVES

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Tax bill could take \$2.3B from Va. revenue

MICHAEL MARTZ AND DAVID RESS
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Virginia could lose more than \$2.3 billion in budget revenues over three years under the tax-cut package that President Donald Trump signed into law on July 4, driven primarily by tax breaks for business.

If Virginia goes along with the big tax breaks for businesses in the "One Big Beautiful Bill," it would mean a \$573 million hit this year and an additional \$559 million in the next two-year budget, which Gov. Glenn Youngkin will propose in December and which the General Assembly will work on next year.

If the state were to go along with other tax breaks in the new law — such as elimination of income taxes on tips, overtime, car loan interest and charitable deductions for taxpayers who do not itemize — that would be an additional hit of nearly \$343 million this year and \$857 million in the next two-year budget.

Those estimates, which the Virginia Department of Taxation provided to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee on Tuesday, represent revenues that Virginia would not have available to pay for additional financial obligations for Medicaid and K-12 public schools, which the House

Appropriations Committee said last week could exceed \$1.75 billion in the next two years.

Senate Finance Chair Louise Lucas, D-Portsmouth, voiced her concern "about the budgetary needs for the upcoming biennial budget and their potential magnitude." Lucas also warned that Virginia could suffer financially from other provisions of the Trump tax-cut package, which shifts costs from the federal government to the states for nutrition assistance and other safety net programs, and unilateral cuts to the federal workforce and spending on which the state's economy depends.

"There are reasons to be concerned," she said. "The actions that have been taken at the federal level are going to cause pain, and we will wait to see how this will manifest itself over the next several months."

Senate Minority Leader Ryan McDougle, R-Hanover, reminded Lucas that the Senate adopted his proposal this year to create an independent Medicaid oversight office to control the program's costs, but the measure died in a House of Delegates committee.

"Certainly, we could see some increases this year, but there are steps that we could have taken as a

legislative body in order to address them," McDougle said.

Secretary of Finance Steve Cummings said the state remains financially strong, with the latest estimates showing revenues \$266.5 million ahead of forecast for the first two months of the fiscal year that began July 1, despite softening of the labor market and pressure on inflation from tariff policy.

"I think we're going to be well-prepared to leave behind a good budget," he said of Youngkin's parting proposal before he leaves office in January.

Please see **TAX**, Page A5



FILE, THE FREE LANCE-STAR

Voters cast their ballots on the first day of early voting in Spotsylvania, 2020.

Early voting starts in Va. Friday

Local county boards and city council up for grabs, along with statewide elections

CATHY DYSON
The Free Lance-Star

There are almost 300,000 registered voters in Fredericksburg and the four counties around it, and chances are, some of them will be chomping at the bit to participate in early voting.

That gets underway on Friday, Sept. 19, and will con-

tinue through Saturday, Nov. 1. Across Virginia, those registered will be able to vote early at city or county registrars' offices during the workweek, and on the two Saturdays before the Nov. 4 election — Oct. 25 and Nov. 1 — from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

In addition to selecting the state's first female governor between Democrat Abigail Spanberger and Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears, voters will elect a lieutenant governor, attorney general and various state delegates.

Locally, they'll also choose members of county Board of Supervisors and School Boards

as well as Fredericksburg's City Council.

Every race is contested in Stafford and Spotsylvania counties. That includes four seats for the Board of Supervisors and four for the School Board in Stafford and three seats on each board in Spotsylvania.

In five of the races in the two localities, three people are vying for one seat.

Stafford has 116,899 registered voters as of Sept. 1, according to the Virginia Department of Elections website. The total include 6,105 military members and 535 registered voters living overseas.

Spotsylvania has 111,403 registered voters, including 3,141 military members and 271 voters overseas, according to the state.

With 20,438 registered voters, the City of Fredericksburg has nine contested races on the ballot, including City Council members from four districts and for the election of a sheriff, commonwealth's attorney, commissioner of revenue and treasurer.

There's also one contested race for School Board in the city while three other races are uncontested.

Please see **VOTING**, Page A5

Cole and Steinway to debate at UMW

The Oct. 2 event is free, no tickets required

CATHY DYSON
The Free Lance-Star

The University of Mary Washington will host a political debate between the two candidates for the 65th District seat in the Virginia House of Delegates at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 2.

The event is free, no tickets are required and members of the audience will be able to submit questions before the event. The incumbent, Democrat Joshua Cole, will face off against Republican Sean Steinway in George Washington Hall's Dodd Auditorium.

As he's done in years past, moderator Stephen Farnsworth will do his utmost to maintain a civil and cordial atmosphere. He's a professor of political science and serves as director of the UMW's Center for Leadership and Media Studies. As moderator, he's been quick to point out that the microphone belongs to those on stage during



Cole



Steinway

Please see **DEBATE**, Page A5

Spotsy teen in custody after shooting incident

KEITH EPPS
The Free Lance-Star

The Spotsylvania Sheriff's Office is investigating an incident Monday evening in which a 16-year-old boy suffered a non-life-threatening gunshot wound to his abdomen, police said.

Sheriff's Maj. Liz Scott said deputies went to the 10900 block of Taney Drive at 6:30 p.m. in response to the reported shooting. They found the injured teen, who

was taken to a local hospital.

Witnesses provided descriptions of two teens who may have been involved, and deputies found them a short time later on a nearby street. While questioning the pair, Scott said, one teen began reaching into his waistband. A deputy noticed the movements and, following a brief struggle, deputies recovered a firearm from the 15-year-old suspect.

Please see **SHOOTING**, Page A9

Officials charge Kirk murder suspect

Authorities: Robinson wrote a confession note, left behind DNA

JESSE BEDAYN, HANNAH SCHOENBAUM AND JOHN SEEWER
Associated Press

PROVO, Utah — Prosecutors brought a murder charge Tuesday against the man accused of killing Charlie Kirk and outlined evidence, including a text message confession to his partner and a note left beforehand saying he had the opportunity to kill one of



Robinson

the nation's leading conservative voices "and I'm going to take it."

DNA on the trigger of the rifle that killed Kirk also matched that of Tyler Robinson, Utah County Attorney Jeff Gray said while outlining the evidence and announcing charges that could result in the death penalty if Robinson is convicted.

The prosecutor said Robinson, 22, wrote in one text that he

spent more than a week planning the attack on Kirk, a prominent force in politics credited with energizing the Republican youth movement and helping Donald Trump win back the White House in 2024.

Kirk was gunned down Sept. 10 while speaking with students at Utah Valley University. Prosecutors allege Robinson shot Kirk in the neck with a bolt-action rifle from the roof of a nearby building on the campus in Orem, about 40 miles south of Salt Lake City.

Please see **KIRK KILLING**, Page A9

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Weather
Rain and drizzle
High 70 • Low 63
FORECAST • B6

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