

VIRGINIA'S NEWS LEADER

Richmond Times-Dispatch

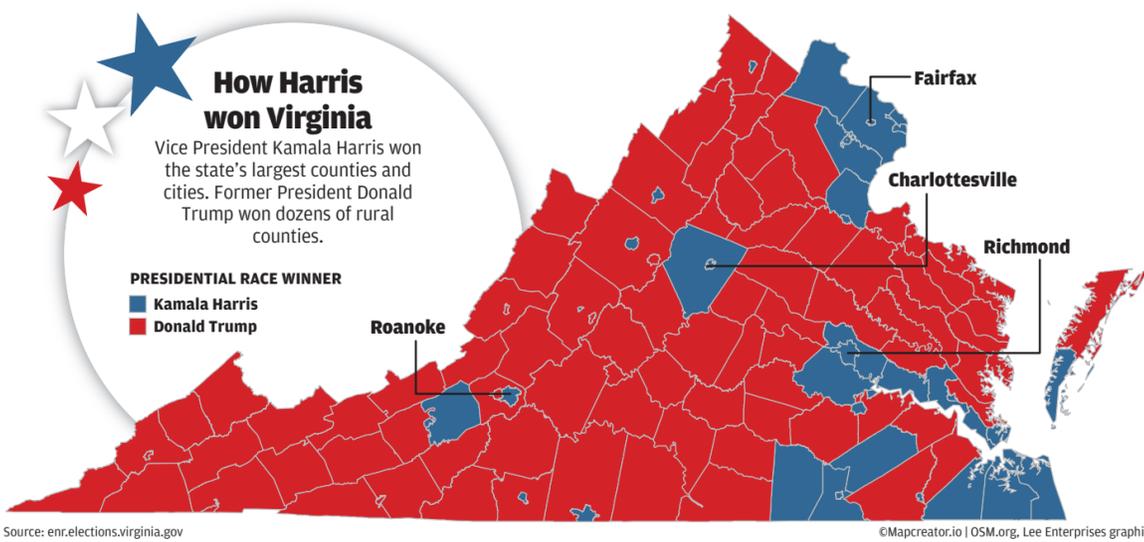
Friday, November 8, 2024

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ELECTION 2024 | ANALYSIS

Less suburban support narrows Harris' margin



SOUTH RICHMOND City plans to acquire Altria land

It would become park and redevelopment

ERIC KOLENICH
Richmond Times-Dispatch

The city of Richmond wants to buy 96 acres in South Richmond belonging to Altria Group Inc. for \$5.5 million.

If approved, the city would declare a public necessity to convert the mostly open property near Interstate 95 and Bells Road into a park and an economic development project.

The plan would provide green space for South Side residents, create jobs, improve traffic and promote civic growth, the city said. Richmond's Planning Commission on Monday recommended approving the ordinance. The City Council would still need to sign off.

The property is owned Philip Morris USA Inc., a subsidiary of the Henrico County-based tobacco giant Altria. The land, which has addresses of 2001 Walmsley Blvd. and 4700 Trenton Ave., is adjacent to Philip Morris' manufacturing center.

There is a two-story, 464,000-square-foot office and laboratory building known as the operations center, vacant

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2024 was another 'it's the economy, stupid' US presidential election

DAVE RESS
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Virginia suburbanites retreated a bit from their enthusiastic support for President Joe Biden in 2020 and gave Vice President Kamala Harris close to the same margin of victory over Donald Trump that Hillary Clinton secured in 2016.

It's a sign, political scientists say, that two central pitches of the Harris campaign — a promise to protect access to abortion and the argument that Trump was an autocrat who threatened American democracy — did not resonate as strongly with suburbanites as higher grocery prices.

"When people tell you what they're concerned about, it pays to listen," said Amanda



Wintersieck

Wintersieck, director of Virginia Commonwealth University's Institute for Democracy, Pluralism, and Community Empowerment. "I think this was another 'it's the economy, stupid' election," she said, quoting the famous line from President Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign.

Harris won Virginia by 5.2 percentage points

Wintersieck said it may be a sign that for at least some male voters, given what exit polls suggest about gender gap, and the way white males voted, the idea of a woman president is a reach too far.

"Virginia's numbers overall

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MIKE KROPP, TIMES-DISPATCH

President-elect Donald Trump made multiple campaign stops in Virginia this year, including this one in Richmond on March 2.



MORE ONLINE: Aim your smartphone camera at this code and tap the link to see more data about Tuesday's election. **NEWSVU**

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MEDICAID FORECAST

State's program faces \$632 million hole

Youngkin still plans additional tax cuts

MICHAEL MARTZ
Richmond Times-Dispatch

Virginia's Medicaid program faces a budget shortfall of almost \$632 million over two years, as Gov. Glenn Youngkin says he is preparing another package of tax cuts for the Democratic-controlled General Assembly to consider next month.

The Department of Medical Assistance Services submitted its annual forecast to assembly budget committees last week. It shows a shortfall of \$337 million the first year and \$295 million in the second, which is unusual in



Youngkin

the year after the state adopts its two-year budget.

"That's going to be a tough nut to crack, but we have to do it," said House Appropriations Vice Chairman Mark Sickles, D-Fairfax, on Thursday. The shortfall includes \$160 million in bills that the state carried over from the last fiscal year after the process of "unwinding" Medicaid rolls from the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in delays that drove up costs in the fiscal year that ended on June 30. Those costs include the repay-

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ment of \$41 million in pharmacy rebates the state had mistakenly deposited in the general fund instead of sending it to the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and a state assessment fund to help cover hospital costs for Medicaid patients.

"The adjustments in the Medicaid forecast are driven by one-time costs associated with post-pandemic redetermina-

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Tracking the news

The background: Virginia's Medicaid program faces a budget shortfall of almost \$632 million over two years.

What's new? Gov. Glenn Youngkin says he will call for more tax cuts in his proposed revisions to the state's two-year budget.

What's next? Democratic leaders say they might support targeted tax relief for some workers, but not for high earners.

TROUBLES AT VDH A challenge to pay bills, retain staff

Report by watchdog cites mismanagement

ERIC KOLENICH
Richmond Times-Dispatch

The state's health department has not paid bills on time, hemorrhaged administrative employees and suffers from a poor workplace culture, a state watchdog reported Thursday.

The Virginia Department of Health has been hampered by significant, long-lasting financial mismanagement, according to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. The most glaring example is the Office of Emergency Medical Services, which misspent \$33 million on off-roading vehicles and a robot.

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Giuliani given a week to turn over valuables to women he defamed

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