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LOCAL NEWS

Incumbents have heavy cash advantage

By ALAN SUPERMAN
The Associated Press

RICHMOND — Challengers looking to knock off incumbent state lawmakers during next week's primary will have to do so at a large spending disadvantage. Eight out of the nine office holders facing a primary challenge enjoy significant cash advantages over their rivals ahead of the June 9 primary, according to an analysis by the Virginia Public Access Project, a nonprofit money-in-

politics tracker.

The most recent campaign finance reports show incumbents have spent more in the final weeks of the campaign and have more cash on hand than their challengers, often by large amounts.

In the marquee primary contest, House Speaker William J. Howell spent more than \$200,000 in April and May, and has \$528,000 cash on hand. Together that's 12 times more cash than his opponent, Susan Stimpson. Incumbents typically raise more than

challengers thanks to their access and relationships with the businesses and other groups. But having the most money doesn't always mean victory. Two years ago, then-Del. Joe May spent more than \$450,000 in a Republican primary while losing to tea party challenger Dave LaRock, who spent about \$80,000.

The only incumbent who is at a cash disadvantage in this year's primary is Republican Del. Mark Berg, a tea party favorite who beat an incumbent in 2013 despite having less money.

FBI

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companies. Huang could not be reached for comment on the FBI's recent documents request, while Ying did not immediately return a phone message left with his wife at his Michigan home.

Liebherr recently dropped the civil lawsuit, which had been heading for a multiweek jury trial next month, against most of the defendants. But under the legal mechanism used to drop the case, the case can be brought back if it's refilled within six months — with lawyers involved in the case saying they expect Liebherr will do that.

FBI Special Agent Aaron Schetere, who requested the court documents from the FBI's Detroit office, did not return phone calls or emails this week on why he asked for them. Meanwhile, David Porter, a press spokesman with the FBI's Detroit office, also declined to explain the request.

"I don't have a comment," Porter said Tuesday. "No one should presume that (the lack of comment) means one thing or another. That's always our answer when we're asked if we can confirm an investigation regarding A, B and C."

Christina Pullen, a spokeswoman for the FBI's Norfolk office, also declined to say why the Detroit office asked for the information. "I cannot respond to what Detroit is doing," she said. "I can't respond to anything on any potential or pending investigation."

That's just our standard."

At a court hearing Monday, Judge Timothy S. Fisher told lawyers about the FBI's document request, said George Bowles, an attorney with Williams Mullen who is representing one of the defendant Chinese manufacturing groups.

Liebherr's lead lawyer on the case, Brett A. Spain with the Norfolk office of Willcott & Savage, declined to say whether he had conversations with the FBI about the matter. "We did not refer to the case, that's all I'll say," Spain said.

The request came about a month after reporters from the Daily Press and Virginian-Pilot met with several FBI officials in Norfolk about the agency's new initiative to crack down on economic espionage in Hampton Roads.

At that meeting, a Daily Press reporter asked whether the FBI was looking into the allegations made by Liebherr. While the agency would neither confirm nor deny an investigation, the agency's top local official, FBI Special Agent in Charge John S. Adams, asked the reporter for more details of the lawsuit — including whether Liebherr was alleging theft of trade secrets by an overseas entity.

But Pullen said Monday that that conversation did not trigger the request from the Detroit office.

"I can tell you that that conversation did not have anything to do with what is going on now," she said. "(Adams) was just asking for clarification... That conversation did not precipitate any action."

Liebherr USA is a division of a

Switzerland-based manufacturing group, Liebherr-International AG, founded in 1949. Liebherr mining trucks — built at a Newport News manufacturing plant off Interstate 664 — stand 29 feet tall and have a carrying capacity of 400 tons.

That dwarf is a normal dump truck, which stands about 10 feet tall and has a 40-ton payload, or only a tenth the capacity of the Liebherr trucks. In the 2011 lawsuit, Liebherr accused six former workers at the Newport News factory of conspiring to steal thousands of sensitive documents from the plant.

Liebherr's suit also accused the Detroit firm of serving as a conduit to Chinese companies, and two Chinese manufacturing partnerships, accusing them of initiating a Liebherr design truck with a 400-ton payload.

The complaint asserts that the documents — from truck designs to vendor information to factory layouts — allowed the Chinese firms to build the trucks "in a fraction of the time, at a fraction of the cost, and with a fraction of the manpower as could be accomplished by lawful means."

If the theft isn't reversed, Liebherr contends, "American manufacturing jobs will be lost" to companies that have ripped off technology and processes that took decades and millions of dollars to develop.

All six workers — as well as the Detroit firm and the Chinese companies — have denied the allegations against them. The original defendant worker died about a year ago.

Dejardin can be reached by phone at 757-247-4749.

alarm the community.

"I'm not concerned (about environmental issues) in the Southeast more than any other part of the city," Price said. "Industries in the area have been environmentally conscious. The shipyard has been an excellent partner in what they do... to make sure that the environmental impact is as little as possible."

The coal terminals, shipyard and other facilities in the Southeast Community must submit annual air emission reports to the DEQ. The Daily Press has submitted a Freedom of Information Act request for those reports, with a response due back Friday.

"For Newport News, DEQ has not received reports indicating exceedances of state air emission limits in recent years," Brandt said. "Mica, in 1998, and the shipyard, in 2012, had enforcement actions for construction of air emissions sources without an air permit."

Mica Co., a manufacturing facility for mica products, is located in the Southeast Community at 900 Jefferson Ave.

"We know there's concern with various companies over there and every year they turn in their emissions and we look at every one with its permit limit," Brandt said. "If within the limits, they're in compliance, we just sign the facts of what we have."

Even though each facility in the Southeast Community is under its state emission limits, the coalition is concerned about the combination of pollutants in the air, coming from several sources combined, said Kendyl Crawford, one of the coalition's leaders.

"The goal is not to put a target on any one company," Jeng said, "it's just to see what's there."

Clift can be reached by phone at 757-247-7870.

But Rick Cole, the company's president, said Dominion Terminal has been making improvements in recent years.

"We put out roughly 25 to 30 percent of what our permit allows us to put out," said Cole, who's been with the company about seven years. "And it decreases each year."

Back in 2011, the company's leaders were considering installing a multimillion-dollar wind fence to cut down on coal dust, possibly with a city subsidy, but ultimately decided against it.

"We looked at it and just didn't feel comfortable that it was the right thing to do," Cole said. "It's not unusual here to get 65-mile-an-hour winds in a thunderstorm. I believe one of these fences would have ended up on I-664."

The company has taken other initiatives to reduce the coal dust, though, such as installing flow control chutes.

"We've been installing them constantly over three or four years," Cole said.

Mayor McKinley Price, who lives in the Christopher Shores neighborhood, about a mile from the coal piers, voiced concerns about the coal dust back in 2011, but said it has improved since then.

"I feel that issue has been diminished through the years," Price said. "You used to have a film on the furniture in the backyard, but not anymore."

To help address concerns of coal dust pollution, Cole joined the Southeast CARE Coalition, and has taken group members on several tours of the facility, he said.

"I felt like if folks had full information, they're much better off than speculating," he said. "It looks like a convoluted mess if you just see it driving on I-664, but if you get up in the tower, it's very organized."

Price said it would be nice for monitoring systems to provide some information, but does not want to

AIR

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the Southeast Community dates back to the 1800s," said Erica Holloman, the coalition's coordinator. "That means that for more than 130 years our community has been subject to industrial pollution."

The group hopes to collect 1,000 signatures by the end of the summer, and then plans to hand the petitions to Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources Molly Ward, a Hampton native.

"We can begin to identify what some of these air quality issues are in the community," said Holloman. "What percentage of the air being breathed contains diesel from trucks on I-664? What percentage of air contains the coal dust? What percentage contains materials from the sandblasting occurring at the shipyard?"

But the air monitoring system isn't likely to provide quick and easy answers to these questions.

For example, it can be difficult to discern a coal dust particle from a dirt particle picked up by the system, said John Brandt, regional air compliance lead meeting manager for the DEQ. "We're not just going to stick a monitor there and then go to a company and say 'you're really bad,'" Brandt said.

One company that's faced questions is Dominion Terminal Associates, one of two terminal companies located at the tip of the Peninsula.

Some Southeast Community residents still worry that coal dust floating over the freeway and in to their neighborhoods could cause property damage and health problems, such as asthma, even though the emissions are well below state limits. Several decades ago, it was so bad that some residents said they couldn't hang their laundry outside to dry.

CONCERT

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irresistible draw for a lot of people.

"I thought it was magical," said Amber Kennedy, director of marketing and community engagement at the Peninsula Fine Arts Center in Newport News. She attended with her husband and friends for the past two years. "Hearing the patriotic song with the symphony under the stars at Colonial Williamsburg was really wonderful."

The canceled concert was part of more than \$100,000 in cuts Colonial Williamsburg made this spring to programs presented by the symphony and Virginia Arts Festival. Most of the rest of the funds went toward an annual contribution to support the arts festival.

Since 2008, the foundation had been supporting the arts festival, which comes to Williamsburg during the long Memorial Day weekend for concerts in the Williamsburg Lodge and other locales. These concerts took

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