

The Washington Post

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Democracy Dies in Darkness

MONDAY, MAY 13, 2024 • \$3

IRS cuts to tribal child support could grow

Households nationwide could see loss in access to some tax refunds

BY JULIE ZAUZMER WEIL

A standoff with Congress rooted in taxpayer privacy has prompted the IRS to cut off a form of child support for families in at least 10 Native American tribes, a scenario that could be replicated in all 50 states as soon as this fall, affecting hundreds of thousands more households.

Every year, more than 1 million tax refunds are garnished at the request of state governments and rerouted to custodial parents. Those efforts are a key piece of the nation's child support pipeline — representing \$2 billion, or 6 percent of such payments in 2022. For many families, those seizures are the only source of child support.

But federal law doesn't allow Native American tribes to collect overdue child support through the tax system, and the IRS has suspended a workaround that formerly allowed some tribes to seize those funds. Meanwhile, a separate concern over states' data sharing could upend the system more broadly.

Most states use contractors to retrieve and reroute federal refunds to custodial parents. But the IRS is supposed to share certain taxpayer information with only governments, not third parties — a rule it overlooked for years for the purpose of sending child support payments.

Last year, the agency changed course and said it would follow the data-sharing restrictions in all instances, notifying states that they had until October 2024 to submit plans showing how they will comply with privacy rules that most states say would be too costly to follow.

That would affect a large
SEE IRS ON A13

Daniels's account opens old wounds

Women who accused Trump are watching his campaign with alarm

BY HANNAH KNOWLES

Amy Dorris tried not to watch too much news last week as Stormy Daniels gave her courtroom account of sex with Donald Trump. But little details from Daniels's story have stuck with her, she said.

The age gap. Daniels's description of leaving a hotel bathroom and being surprised to see Trump in his boxers. Dorris said it reminded her of her own encounter with Trump outside a restroom in 1997, when she and her boyfriend attended the U.S. Open tennis tournament in Trump's VIP box. "I came out," Dorris recalled, "and there he was."

Dorris said Trump was suddenly kissing her and groping all over her body, despite her protests. She first disclosed her account
SEE #METOO ON A4



LOUISE JOHNS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

A divide over climate tech

The remote stretch of public grazing land in southeastern Montana has hardly changed since homesteading days, but underneath this wind-swept expanse lies a hidden asset in high demand: thousands of acres of porous rock where oil company executives say greenhouse gas could be piped in from afar and stored forever.

ExxonMobil and the Biden administration see in the grassy 100,000 acres a launchpad for one of the world's most audacious climate experiments, a plan to take emissions spewing from power plants and factories and trap them underground where they cannot contribute to global warming. The scheme is inching forward despite criticism it will permit polluters to keep polluting while slowing the transition to solar and wind

The U.S. and Big Oil have a plan to trap emissions, but local opposition in many places is fierce

BY EVAN HALPER

energy. And now sponsors face the additional hurdle of intense local opposition.

In the ranching community of Carter County, Mont., the prospect of shipping in all that carbon pollution and injecting it underneath an area called Snowy River is about as popular as an outbreak of hoof-and-mouth disease.

"The question I keep hearing is, 'Why are they making us the dumping ground for the rest of the country?'" said Rod Tauck, chairman of the Carter County Board of Commissioners and a descendant of homesteaders who more than a century ago settled his family ranch. "Not a single constituent I know wants this."

Such tensions are emerging nationwide, throwing an industrial-size wrench into the
SEE CARBON ON A6

Liz Barbour, manager of the Cinch Buckle Ranch in Broadus, Mont., checks on cattle in April. Barbour and her neighbors worry a proposed carbon sequestration project by ExxonMobil will disrupt the area's fragile ecosystem.

For some Ukrainian troops, babies they'll never see

Many soldiers have been blinded in battle — an especially devastating loss for new parents

BY SIOBHÁN O'GRADY AND KOSTIANTYN KHUODO

KYIV — In the 10 months since his daughter was born, Ruslan Kozachok has hardly left her side.

He held baby Isabella in the hospital before his wife did. Later, he's learned to keep her steady as she practices her first steps. But he has never seen her.

Three months before Isabella's birth, Kozachok, 47, was blinded when shrapnel from a Russian shell pierced the left side of his skull in Chasiv Yar, the small city where he was fighting as a soldier in eastern Ukraine.

Kozachok was once a tattoo artist with his own salon, but his injury has robbed him of his profession, his hobbies, his routine and, most painfully, of the chance to see his daughter grow up.

On the front lines of Russia's bloody war, Ukrainian troops are killed and wounded daily, scarring and maiming a generation of young people. Many, like Kozachok, voluntarily joined the military in the first days of the invasion in 2022.

Severe eye injuries are pervasive. At least 1,000 soldiers have been blinded in the past two years, said Anna Purtova, a lawmaker who is advocating for



OKSANA PARAFENIUK FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Ivan Soroka, a Ukrainian veteran who lost sight in both eyes due to combat injuries, holds his son Sviatoslav three days after his birth.

soldiers who have lost their vision. Tetiana Lytvynenko, head of ophthalmology at a Kyiv hospital that treats soldiers and civilians, said the 30 beds in her ward are always full.

While medical advances have improved treatment for many war injuries, including with enhanced prosthetic limbs, little can be done for those who lose vision in both eyes and must learn to navigate the world without sight. Ukraine has not yet adapted to its growing blind population. Guide dogs are uncommon, many streetlights do not beep for pedestrians, and drivers often park on city sidewalks, creating dangerous obstacles.

Some wounded Ukrainians are struggling with all of these challenges while also facing parent-hood blind.

For nine years before his injury, Kozachok and his wife, Yulia, who works in a bank, dreamed of starting a family. She was six months pregnant when she visited her husband in the hospital and told him what his doctors had explained to her: His vision was gone forever.

Kozachok's head injury could easily have been fatal. He lost one eye immediately and had to crawl to an evacuation point,
SEE UKRAINE ON A16

Forced to flee in Gaza again

NO PLACE IS SAFE, AID AGENCIES SAY

U.S. again warns Israel as Rafah push continues

BY MIRIAM BERGER, NIHA MASIH, LEO SANDS AND CLAIRE PARKER

JERUSALEM — Israeli forces continued to advance on the southern city of Rafah on Sunday and launched another operation against Hamas in the north, setting off a desperate scramble among war-weary civilians across Gaza. Humanitarian agencies warned that no place was safe and that essential aid had nearly run out, almost a week after Israel captured and shut down the border crossing with Egypt.

The expanding evacuations in Rafah, where Israel had ordered more than 1 million Palestinians to seek shelter from fighting early in the war, signaled a possible push into the heart of the city — a move that could prompt Washington, Israel's staunchest ally, to freeze offensive weapons shipments after months of faltering cease-fire negotiations.

"We cannot, will not support an operation in Rafah, a major military operation, in the absence of a credible plan to protect civilians, and they [Israel] still haven't delivered," Secretary of State Antony Blinken told CBS's "Face the Nation" on Sunday.

On a call between national security adviser Jake Sullivan and his Israeli counterpart, Tzachi Hanegbi, they discussed
SEE ISRAEL ON A9

Menendez trial could be a tale of riches

Senator is accused of bribery, extortion and obstruction of justice

BY SALVADOR RIZZO

Bars of gold, stacks of cash, a Mercedes-Benz convertible and foreign intelligence officials could all make cameo appearances as Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) goes on trial Monday — for the second time in a decade — on federal charges that he used his position and influence to benefit a trio of businessmen who were plying him with luxury gifts.

Menendez's previous corruption case featured similar bribery allegations but ended in 2017 with a deadlocked jury in New Jersey. This time, experts say the once-powerful chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee faces a tougher task: convincing jurors in Manhattan federal court that he legally obtained the ingots, cash, convertible and
SEE MENENDEZ ON A2

IN THE NEWS

Shake-up in Russia Vladimir Putin has removed Sergei Shoigu from his position as defense minister and appointed him to lead the nation's security and defense council. **A11**

Personal attacks At a large rally on the Jersey Shore, Donald Trump insulted the prosecutor who charged him in Manhattan. **A2**

THE NATION **Much to Trump's** annoyance, a secondary storyline is emerging from his ongoing criminal trial in New York: that of a former president who just can't stay awake. **A3**

THE WORLD **The rooftop rescue** of a horse delivered a brief moment of joy in flood-stricken Brazil. **A8** **Hospitals were** overflowing in a besieged Sudanese city as a final battle loomed. **A13**

THE ECONOMY **Google's "Find My"** device network is useful but also a stalking risk, Shira Ovide writes. **A12**

THE REGION **Rep. Jennifer Wexton** (D) backed Virginia state Sen. Suhas Subramanyam in the crowded race to succeed her in Congress. **B1**

The Rockville Volunteer Fire Department was defrauded of \$220,000 in a scam tied to the purchase of new ambulances. **B1** **A sailor** killed during the attack on Pearl Harbor was interred at Arlington National Cemetery more than eight decades later. **B1**

OBITUARIES **Roger Corman, 98**, was a low-budget but resourceful filmmaker who helped launch the careers of Hollywood luminaries. **B4**

STYLE **At Mar-a-Lago**, at least, Trump's public approval rating is still through the roof. **C1**

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