



# Division of Capitol Police News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Va. Capitol Police urge caution after car break-ins

**RICHMOND** – The Virginia Division of Capitol Police is urging motorists to not leave valuables in their vehicles and to keep them locked after officers arrested a man who was stealing items from cars at Capitol Square.

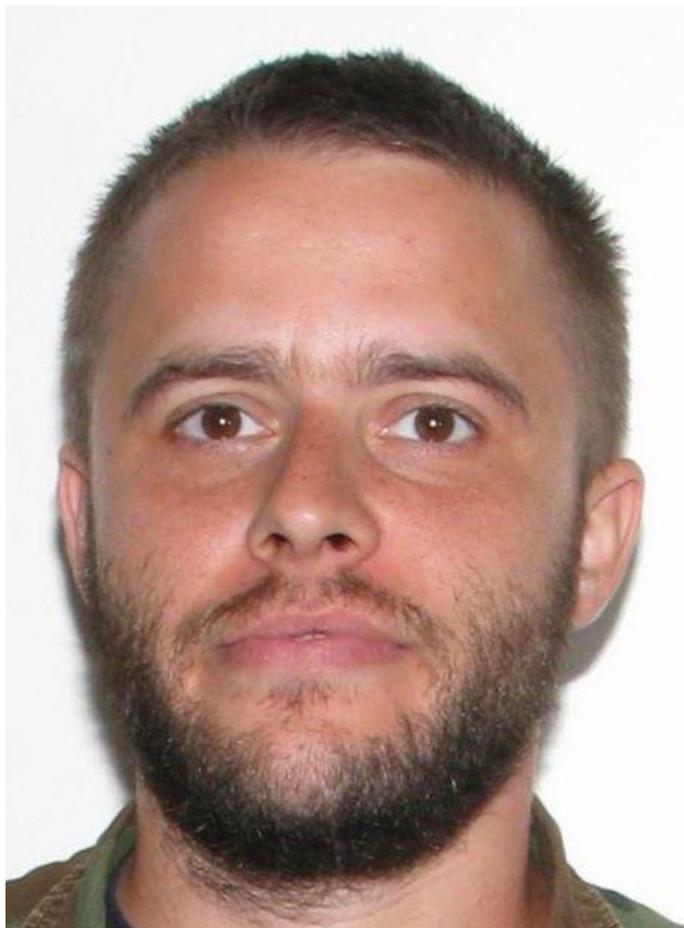
“Unfortunately, there’s typically an increase in property crimes in the summer months, and that’s especially true with car break-ins,” said Col. John T. McKee, the Capitol Police chief. “Securing your valuables and your vehicles can go a long way in preventing a crime before it ever gets started.”

Richmond officials said thefts from vehicles were up 21 percent in the first six months of 2023 compared to the same period a year ago. In many cases, no forced entry was required because the vehicles were left unlocked.

“Our officers were able to catch someone in the act the other day, and for that, we owe thanks to some vigilant Capitol Square employees and our security partners,” McKee said. “Unfortunately, the vehicles he targeted were unlocked and easily accessible to him.”

Preston A. Cantrell, 28, of no permanent address, was inside a sedan in a state parking lot along Governor Street on July 19 when a Capitol Police officer approached him, ordered him out of the vehicle and placed him in custody.

A search of Cantrell turned up several retail gift cards, two car keys and a small amount of cash. Cantrell, who admitted gaining access to several vehicles by pulling on their doors, was charged with one count each of petit larceny and entering a vehicle with the intent to commit a crime, both misdemeanors.



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