
News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN
BEN CLINE



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Last week saw an attempt by Democrats to build support for an unconstitutional power grab under the guise of increasing "voting rights." In reality, the bill would nationalize our election laws, legalize ballot harvesting, and use taxpayer dollars for political campaigns. While this bill has passed the House, the Senate will be debating and voting on the bill this week. Last week, I also wrote several letters along with my colleagues calling on President Biden to remove Education Secretary Cardona for vilifying parents, as well as demanding answers as to how our Nation is facing a testing shortage, despite more than \$80 billion being appropriated by Congress to enhance testing. Finally, as the Virginia Supreme Court released the new Congressional maps following the 2020 census, I wanted to take time below to explain what it means for Sixth District residents. Again, I'd like to thank everyone who has wished me well this week as I recovered from COVID-19, and I look forward to returning to Washington on Tuesday to serve the good people of western Virginia.

Partisan Antics:

Over the past several weeks, Senate Democrats have been advocating for the abolishment of the filibuster, which dates to 1837, in order to pass two unconstitutional and far-reaching "voting rights" bills that would strip rights away from the states and nationalize elections. The Senator leading the charge, Chuck Schumer, once said that eliminating the filibuster would, "be a doomsday for Democracy." Further, Schumer himself has voted more than 500 times throughout his career to sustain the filibuster, and in 2020 alone, the Democrats used the filibuster 327 times. Yet that hasn't stopped him or the Democrats from now flip-flopping on their

position in order to pursue a liberal agenda. This is the height of hypocrisy.

The Constitution reserves to the States the primary role in establishing, “the Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives.” Yet, the bill the Senate is attempting to pass would give President Biden’s Department of Justice and Federal courts the power to exert considerable control over state and local election laws. For example, one of the main provisions in the bill would give the Biden Administration authority to veto states’ voter ID laws, despite a recent survey finding that 81 percent of Americans support voter identification laws. Further, these bills would allow politicians to fill their campaign coffers with tax-payer dollars through a contribution matching scheme. For instance, based on current fundraising levels, under these bills Speaker Pelosi would receive up to \$22.7 million in public dollars for her reelection campaign, and Senate Majority Leader Schumer would receive up to \$44.1 million for his reelection campaign. This is unacceptable, and American tax dollars should never be used to fund political campaigns. Further, another provision in the proposal would legalize ballot harvesting, which allows third-party individuals, volunteers, or campaign workers to collect and submit completed absentee or mail-in ballots from voters. This is a dangerous concept and presents a very real opportunity for voter fraud. At their core, these two bills seek to politicize voting and push a false narrative that there is a crisis in voting rights, when in fact there was record turnout amongst all demographics in the last election. Republicans support expanding access to voting, but these pieces of legislation are nothing more than a power grab attempting to federalize elections and ensure Democratic control of Congress.

Standing With Parents:

President Biden’s Secretary of Education, Miguel Cardona, lied to the American people when he denied requesting a [letter](#) from the National School Boards Association (NSBA) that compared concerned parents to “domestic terrorists” in September during an interview with “CBS Mornings,” on Wednesday. He said, “We didn’t ask for that letter. We didn’t...No. Specifically with that letter, we had no -- we didn’t request that, there was no involvement in that.” However, newly revealed [emails](#) contradict that assertion and confirm that Secretary Cardona, in fact, did solicit the letter. This is in addition to previous [emails](#) that revealed the NSBA coordinated with Biden’s White House and the Department of Justice for weeks about their letter’s content before publicly sending it. These revelations show an egregious act of betrayal on the part of the Federal government toward American families. Parents deserve an Education Secretary that will fight for them and their rights, not one who actively seeks to vilify them. For these reasons, I joined my colleagues in writing to President Biden urging him to fire Secretary Cardona. The full letter can be found [here](#).



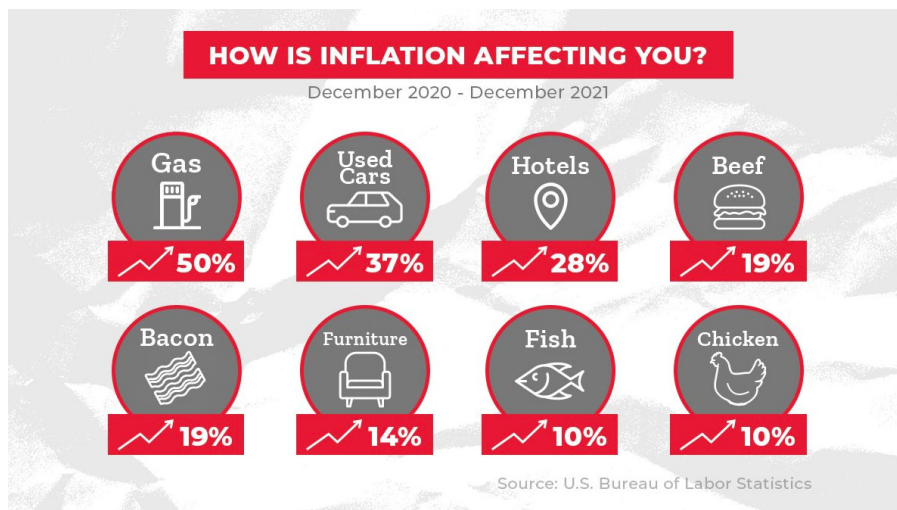


COVID Testing Shortages:

In May of 2021, Politico reported that the Biden Administration withdrew more than \$2 billion out of programs authorized by Congress, including funding to expand coronavirus testing and emergency medical supplies. These funds were diverted to cover the cost of sheltering a surge of migrants that have crossed our southern border illegally in the past year - an influx that is no doubt a result of the President's decision to sign executive orders reversing successful Trump Administration immigration policies. Due to this Administration's decision to prioritize illegal border crossers over the health of American citizens, there are now countless reports of millions of Americans across our Nation waiting in lines for hours to receive a COVID-19 test. These same Americans are then forced to wait days to receive their results, putting their loved ones at risk. As a result of the shortage of COVID-19 tests and severe backlog of samples that need testing, my colleagues and I wrote to the President demanding answers as to how his Administration plans to rectify the situation. The full letter can be found [here](#).

Rising Costs:

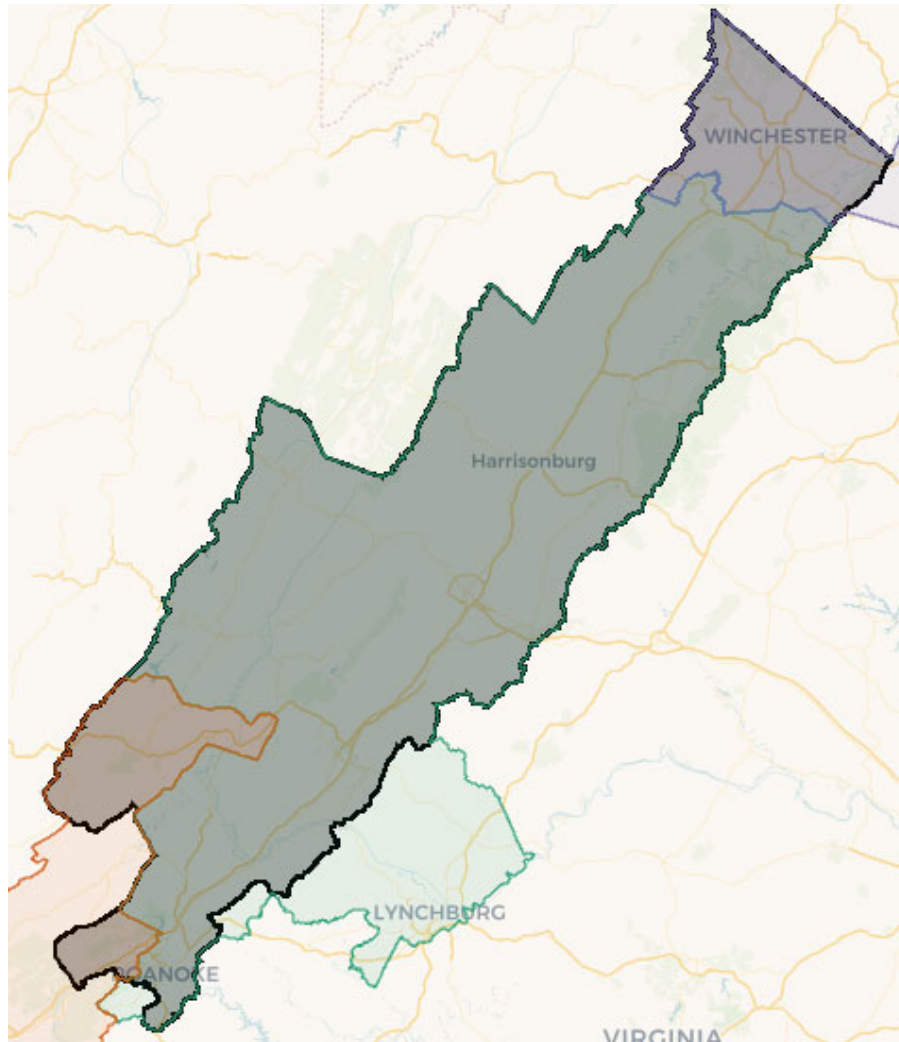
This week, the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirmed what Americans already know - that the prices of everyday goods have skyrocketed in the past twelve months. New data shows that the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a key inflation index, hit a 40-year high in December. The CPI rose 7% last month compared to a year ago, marking the largest annual increase since 1982. The CPI report is the latest sign that Biden's and Democrats' out-of-control spending is only worsening the economic crisis as Americans are now making less while paying more for just about everything. Further, on Monday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics also released the December Jobs Report, which was the worst of the Biden Presidency. The United States added only 199,000 jobs in December, falling more than 200,000 short of what experts had predicted. The hits only keep coming, and the Biden Administration has made clear that they have no plan to get our economy back on track.



Redistricting:

The Virginia Supreme Court recently released the finalized Congressional maps for the Commonwealth following the conclusion of the 2020 Census. While the majority of the Sixth District will remain the same, it now will include Frederick, Clarke, and Alleghany counties, in

addition to the Cities of Winchester, Covington, and Salem. Unfortunately, though, the boundaries of the new Sixth District will no longer contain Bedford and Amherst Counties, nor the City of Lynchburg. However, please know, the new District lines will not officially go into effect until January 3, 2023. Therefore, I will still represent folks in Lynchburg, Bedford, and Amherst until the end of this year. Until January of 2023, folks in Frederick, Clarke, and Winchester should continue to contact Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton, and folks in Alleghany, Covington, and Salem should continue to contact Congressman Morgan Griffith for all legislative and casework needs. While I would like to assist individuals in these areas with such matters before January of 2023, House Ethics Rules prohibit me from doing so. If you have any further questions about redistricting, please don't hesitate to contact my office.



Mobile Office Hours:

Virginia's Sixth District stretches more than 150 miles from Strasburg in the north to Roanoke in the south. While I have four District offices throughout our region in Harrisonburg, Staunton, Roanoke, and Lynchburg, my goal has always been to make myself and my staff as accessible as possible to folks in the Sixth District. For that reason, my staff regularly hold Mobile Office Hours throughout the District to assist residents with any issues they may have with a Federal agency, as well as hear folks' concerns regarding legislative matters. This coming week, my staff will hold Mobile Office Hours in Lexington and Woodstock. For more information, please visit my website [here](#).





Staff Mobile Office Hours

Lexington

Date: Thursday, January 20

Time: 9:00am - 10:30am

Location: Rockbridge County Administrative Offices

Woodstock

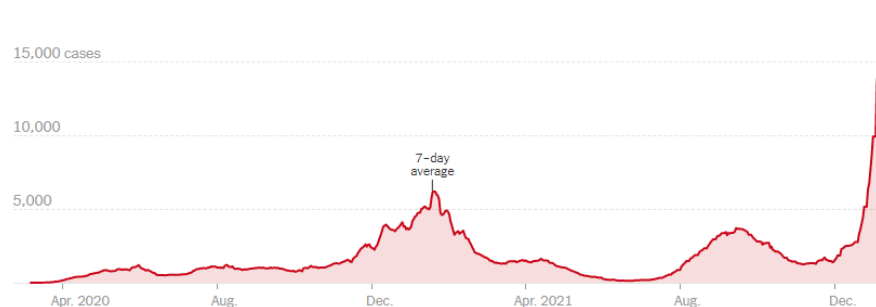
Date: Thursday, January 20

Time: 9:30am - 11:00am

Location: Woodstock Town Hall

COVID-19 Update:

This week in Virginia there was an average of **178.5** cases of COVID-19 per every 100,000 residents. This is up from an average of **161.7** cases from one week prior. This week's positivity rate was **40.2%**, up from **33.9%** from last week. As many of you know, I was one of those who tested positive for COVID last week. I deeply appreciate the well-wishes from friends and constituents across the Sixth District. While I enjoyed working from home during my time recovering, I was disappointed to have missed the inaugural festivities in Richmond for Governor Glenn Youngkin, Lt. Governor Winsome Sears, and Attorney General Jason Miyares. Nevertheless, better to be safe than sorry when it comes to COVID. For more information, click [here](#).



Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Congressman. If my office can ever be of assistance, please contact my Washington office at (202) 225-5431.

For the latest updates from Washington and across the Sixth District, please follow my [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages.

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