

News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN
BEN CLINE



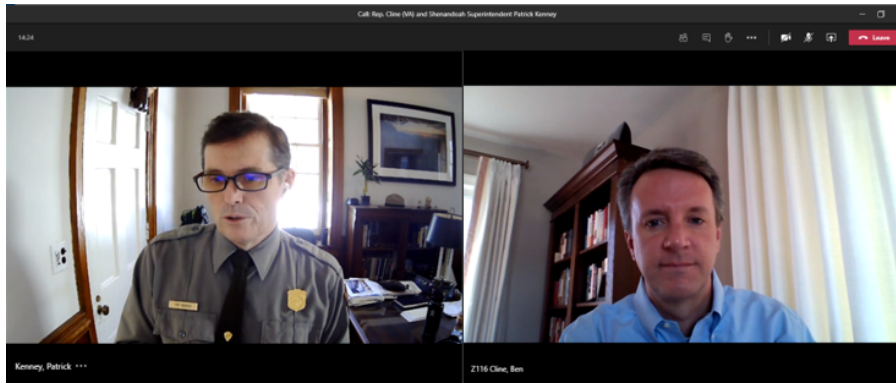
Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

This week, valuable time that should have been spent addressing the critical issues facing American families and small businesses was once again wasted by Congressional Democrats with another impeachment and trial of Donald Trump. And once again, Donald Trump was acquitted by the U.S. Senate. While Congress continues to put politics over people, it was nevertheless a productive week here in Virginia's beautiful Sixth District. I had the opportunity to meet with several constituents and advocacy groups from the across the District, including the Superintendent of Shenandoah National Park, folks from Special Olympics International, academic leaders, officials from the Port of Virginia, and members of the forestry industry. I also joined my colleagues in writing to several Biden Administration officials and the President himself regarding several troubling issues. Whether I'm in Washington or the Sixth District, I will always advocate for policies that benefit my constituents.

Meeting with Constituents:

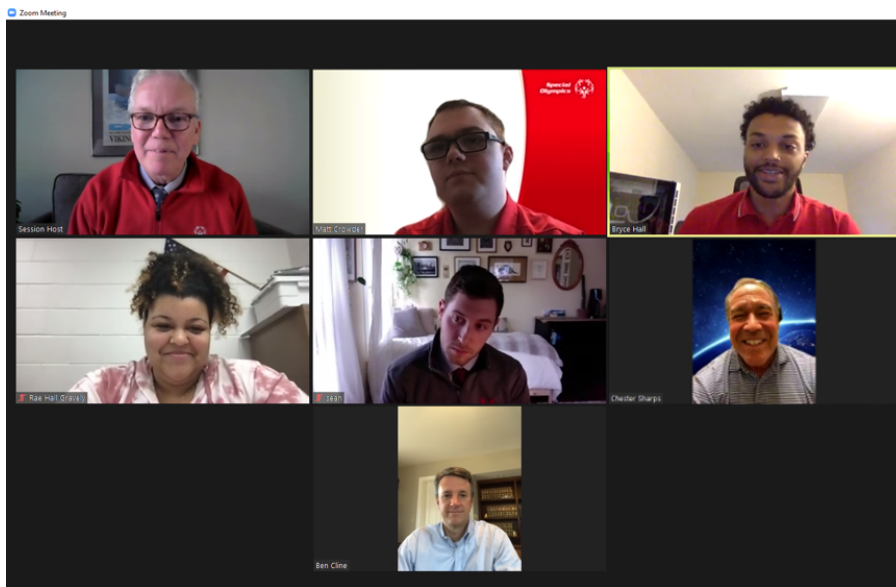
Shenandoah National Park

In 2019, 1.4 million visitors to Shenandoah National Park spent \$96.7 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 1,190 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$129 million. Needless to say, the Park is vital to Virginia's Sixth District. For this reason, I maintain a close relationship with Park leadership and this week spoke to the new Superintendent, Patrick Kenney, to discuss how COVID-19 has affected the Park's operations and the importance of safely reinvigorating tourism in the region during the pandemic.



Special Olympics International

Special Olympics International is an organization that changes lives by encouraging and empowering people with intellectual disabilities by promoting acceptance for all, and by fostering communities of understanding and respect worldwide. Federal partnerships allow Special Olympics to provide vital services to athletes and families, including the Special Olympics Healthy Athletes program and Unified Champion Schools Educational programs. This week it was a pleasure to chat with Roanoke resident and Special Olympics athlete, Matt Crowder, about the organization's work in enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. To learn more about Matt's work, click [here](#).



National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Virginia's Sixth District is home to more institutions of higher education than nearly any other district in the country. With more than 20 colleges and universities within our borders, students from across the United States flock to the Sixth District to pursue their education. For this reason, it is critically important that I foster an open dialogue between myself and our region's schools to ensure that I am best representing their and our students' interests. This week, I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with members of the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and other academic leaders from across the district to discuss education policy and ways to ensure student health on campus. As an active member of the Congressional Independent Colleges Caucus, I will remain an advocate for the hundreds of thousands of students receiving an education within the Sixth District.

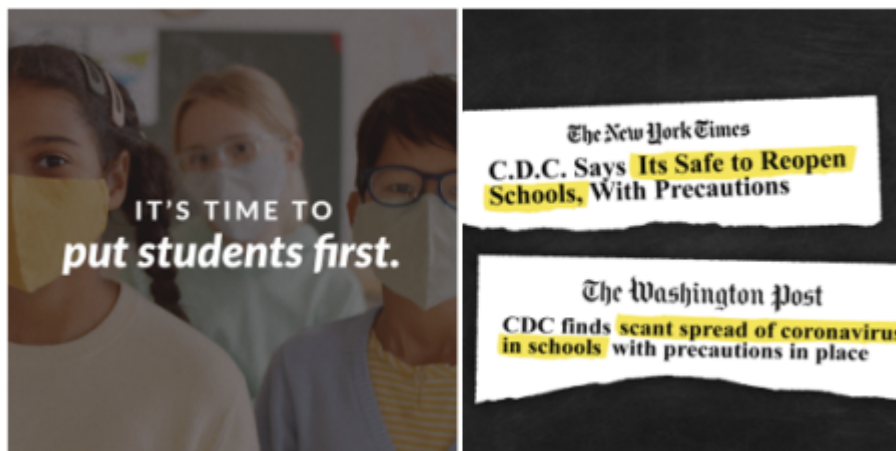


Advocating on Your Behalf:

Reopening Schools

As a parent, I understand the importance of keeping our children safe and ensuring they receive a good education. Remote learning served an invaluable purpose in the height of the pandemic, but it cannot be the only option moving forward. Recently, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) released clinical guidance titled “COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools.” In this report, the AAP outlined key principles to help with safely reopening our schools and strongly advocated that all policy considerations start with a goal of having students physically present in school. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has [emphasized](#) the importance of reopening schools “as safely and as quickly as possible for in-person learning.” To read more of the CDC’s guidelines for schools click [here](#).

President Biden promised that he would support policies to reopen schools in the first 100 days of his presidency. Unfortunately, the Administration’s proposed policy of reopening 50 percent of our Nation’s schools and with students in the classroom as little as one day a week is not enough. This is unacceptable, and my colleagues and I wrote to President Biden insisting he reconsider his plan. The full letter can be found [here](#).



Open Borders

Based on information from sources on the ground, this week, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents have seen illegal crossings soar to more than 3,500 migrants a day, up from 2,000 earlier last month. This comes on the heels of several Executive Orders signed by President Biden aimed at weakening our immigration system. These orders halt construction of the border wall, reduce immigration enforcement, order non-citizens to be included in the Census, eliminate the requirement for illegal immigrants to repay the federal government if they receive public benefits, and will allow for 125,000 refugees to be admitted into the United States this year. Policies such as these encourage migrants to make the dangerous trip across the U.S-Mexico border and pose a grave threat to our national security, our economic and

health recovery from COVID, and to American jobs. Read a letter to President Biden expressing concern for these policies [here](#).



Defending the Second Amendment

Recently, Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee introduced the *Sabika Sheikh Firearm Licensing and Registration Act*. Not only would this legislation create a national firearms registry, but it would also require individuals to have a federal license to possess any firearm or ammunition. Further, this bill would mandate gun owners to have firearm related insurance and ban certain calibers of ammunition. Legislation like this tramples on the constitutional rights of law-abiding citizens, and I will strongly oppose it.



COVID-19 Update:

As of February 14, 2021, Virginia has had 549,999 total cases of COVID-19, including confirmed lab tests and clinical diagnoses, according to the Virginia Department of Health. The current death toll in the Commonwealth stands at 7,012. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of February 13, 994,631 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 303,942 people are fully vaccinated.

On Tuesday, February 16 and Wednesday, February 17 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. the Martinsburg VAMC will be hosting walk-in COVID-19 Vaccination POD's (Point of Dispensing) for enrolled Veterans who are 65 and older or Veterans who are essential personnel as defined by the CDC. Veterans will need to arrive by 3 p.m. to check-in for the vaccine in the main lobby. Veterans will need to bring their VA ID Card and Driver's License (or other identification) that shows their date of birth. To learn more, 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.

Washington D.C. Office
1009 Longworth
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5431

Harrisonburg Office
70 N Mason St
Suite 110
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
Phone: (540) 432-2391

Lynchburg Office
916 Main St
Suite 300
Lynchburg, VA 24504
Phone: (434) 845-8306

Roanoke Office
10 Franklin Rd SE
Suite 510
Roanoke, VA 24011
Phone: (540) 857-2672

Staunton Office
117 S Lewis St
Suite 215
Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (540) 885-3861

[Unsubscribe](#)