

News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN
BEN CLINE



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Amazingly, despite the current crisis in Afghanistan, an open southern border, soaring crime in our cities, and rising inflation rates, the Speaker saw fit to call Congress back into session last week solely to pass the framework for a \$3.5 trillion socialist spending spree, as well as a misguided bill that would nationalize control of our elections and effectively ban protections like photo ID. The actions of the Speaker and this Administration this week highlighted just how truly out of touch they are with the American people. I will continue to fight for the best interests of Sixth District residents and will strive to advance policies that move this Nation forward.

Tragedy in Afghanistan:

The past week has been filled with shock, anger, and sorrow, as we watched the poorly planned withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan by the current Administration result in the preventable deaths of 13 American soldiers who were killed Friday by cowardly ISIS-K terrorists in a pair of suicide bombings. These killings, and the wounding of hundreds of Americans and Afghan civilians, cannot be allowed to stand. I strongly support aggressive military action to destroy those in ISIS-K responsible for this heinous act.

We must also demand answers from the current Administration about why the evacuation of American citizens and Afghan partners is being handled so poorly. This is not a partisan issue, as Members of Congress from both parties including Virginia Senator Mark Warner are calling for further investigation. It would be most productive if Speaker Pelosi brought the House back into immediate session, so we could investigate and hold accountable those whose mishandling of the evacuation created the conditions for this catastrophe. This includes the misguided promise to the Taliban by the Biden Administration that they will leave by August 31, an arbitrary deadline made by President Biden that ignores current conditions on the ground in Kabul. We must also demand answers as to why the Administration would endanger Americans

and Afghan partners by sharing information about their identities with the Taliban. Already we are seeing the Taliban resume random door-to-door searches of homes in Kabul searching for those who helped U.S. forces. We cannot leave a single American behind, and we must protect those Afghan partners who have been loyal to our efforts over the last 20 years.

In order to do everything possible to protect those still stranded in Afghanistan, I am calling on the Administration to declare the Taliban in violation of their evacuation agreement with American forces, declare the evacuation date of August 31 null and void, and inform the Taliban that American troops will remain in Afghanistan for as long as is necessary to ensure that every American, every piece of American military equipment, and every Afghan partner who qualifies is safely evacuated. The American people deserve answers, and the 13 American heroes who lost their lives yesterday deserve strong and decisive action from a grateful Nation that honors their memory and their sacrifices for freedom.



Photo Credit: AP

Bernie's Budget Giveaway:

The obvious issue Congress should have been addressing this week is the debacle in Afghanistan. However, instead, the Speaker called the House back into session to take up the Left's number one priority – a decades-long wish list that is anything but traditional infrastructure. The passage of Bernie's Budget resolution marked the first step to enact President Biden's reckless \$3.5 trillion tax and spending spree. Make no mistake about it, this is a trojan horse filled with Far-Left Democrats' socialist dreams. It will kill American jobs, increase taxes on families, increase inflation, provide amnesty for millions of illegal immigrants, eliminate 'right-to-work' protections, expand government control of healthcare, and so much more. I joined my colleagues at a press conference this week highlighting the disastrous provisions included in this bill.

The budget calls for the highest sustained federal spending levels in American history and proposes \$68 trillion in total spending over the next ten years, \$16.3 trillion of total deficit spending over ten years, and increases the national debt by \$17 trillion, growing to \$45 trillion by 2031. This level of spending is reckless with inflation already at a 13-year high and real hourly wages having fallen 2.7 percent in the last quarter. Further, this week a key inflation indicator, the Core Personal Consumption Expenditures Price Index rose by 3.6% from last month, marking the highest jump in 30 years (May, 1991). This is on top of the Producer Price Inflation (PPI) index rising 7.8% and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rising 5.4% over the last twelve months - both record numbers. Americans are already paying more for everyday products, and legislation like this will only exacerbate the problem.

- Car rentals are UP 73.5%
- Gas is UP 41.8%
- Hotels are UP 24.1%
- Airfare is UP 19%
- Fish is UP 8.5%
- Sports equipment is UP 7.2%

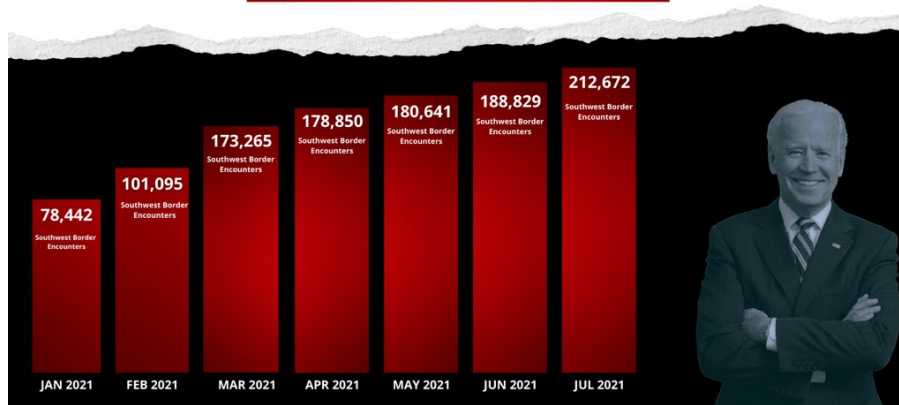


"Remain in Mexico" Policy:

One of the many Trump immigration policies that the Biden Administration reversed which led to the crisis at our border was the Migrant Protection Protocols - more commonly known as the "Remain in Mexico" policy. This policy requires many asylum seekers to stay in Mexico while they await hearings on their requests for safe haven in the U.S. Following the implementation of this policy by the Trump Administration, illegal crossings plummeted and more than 60,000 illegal immigrants were returned to Mexico in a 13-month period. President Biden's reversal of this policy, along with canceling asylum agreements with our regional partners and halting border wall construction, led to record-breaking numbers of illegal crossings. My colleagues and I had [written](#) to the Department of Homeland security expressing our concern with this policy reversal, but our concerns were ignored. Fortunately, this week, the Supreme Court ruled in a 6-3 decision that the "Remain in Mexico" policy must be reimplemented. Hopefully this ruling can help slow the crisis at our border.

BIDEN'S BORDER CRISIS

A public health, humanitarian, and national security crisis



Politicizing Our Elections:

The Constitution reserves to the States the primary role in establishing, “the Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives.” Yet, H.R. 4 would give President Biden’s Department of Justice and federal courts the power to exert considerable control over state and local election laws. Further, H.R. 4 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, this bill seeks to politicize voting and pushes 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 this legislation was nothing more than a Pelosi power grab attempting to ensure Democratic control of the House.

PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act:

As many as 20% of Veterans who return from combat suffer from PTSD, and on average, 20 Veterans die a day from suicide. Congress must find solutions to combat this growing crisis, which is why I was pleased to support and see the *PAWS for Veterans Therapy Act* signed into law. This bill creates a pilot program that will expand opportunities for Veterans to get involved with training and adopting service dogs. Studies show that service animals can help reduce depression, anxiety, anger, and alcohol and substance abuse, as well as fewer sleep disturbances. Further, properly trained service dogs can alert Veterans to PTSD triggers, such as crowded areas or unanticipated risks, and provide security and a calming effect to alleviate anxiety. Supporting commonsense bills like this is just one of the ways in which we can support those who have given so much to our country.



Honoring VFW Post 7814:

I recently honored the 75th anniversary of the Thomas-Fields Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7814, which was founded on July 11, 1946. This week I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the Post’s leadership and present them with a copy of the Congressional Record. I applaud the Thomas-Fields VFW Post for their tremendous work in our community and their efforts to aid those who served.

When African American Veterans of World War II returned to their homes in the Staunton-Augusta area, they were unfortunately excluded from their local Veterans of Foreign Wars Post. Following their denied admittance, a group of forty-two Veterans then applied for a charter to organize their own post, which would carry the namesakes of Charles Thomas and Glenwood Fields, two African Americans from Staunton who died while serving their country in World War II. Since its formation, the Thomas-Fields Post has been an active civic organization in the African American community of Staunton and Augusta County, as well as played an active and

significant role in local Veterans' activities. While the Post welcomes all Veterans, it continues to highlight the heritage of African American and minority Veterans who have served our Nation. Recently, Post 7814 was recognized as a Meritorious Post by the State VFW Federation for its outstanding work over the past five years and was also named an All-American Post by the National VFW Council for the first time in its history.



COVID-19 Update:

As of August 29, 2021, Virginia has had 754,652 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 11,769. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of August 29th, 5,557,112 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 4,868,886 people are fully vaccinated.



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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