

SIXTH DISTRICT PERSPECTIVES WITH CONGRESSMAN BEN CLINE

News From Congressman Ben Cline



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

During committee hearings in Congress this week, I questioned several of President Biden's top officials about their support for restrictive COVID shutdowns and funding increases for Green New Deal projects in their respective agencies. I pressed Dr. Fauci about the devastating ramifications lockdowns had on the well-being of the public and pushed back on Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo's absurd comments that families should not worry about putting clothes on their kids' backs because climate change would kill them. Additionally, I joined my colleagues in introducing a resolution calling for the immediate resignation of the Secretary of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas, for his unwillingness to secure our southern border. Finally, I was pleased to recognize the Virginia National Guard as we celebrate Military Appreciation Month. It is an honor to serve the people of Virginia's Sixth District in Congress, and I will continue to ensure my constituents' voices are heard when the House returns to Washington next week.

Fauci Hearing:

This week, I questioned Dr. Fauci about the devastating consequences his lockdowns had on the American public. Test scores among our Nation's youth plummeted, 4 in 10 adults in the US reported symptoms of anxiety or depression, youth suicide attempts soared, substance abuse and overdoses skyrocketed, and the number of domestic violence cases significantly increased. Yet in his testimony, Dr. Fauci hardly acknowledged these facts, and instead, brushed them off claiming what we experienced in the United States were not lockdowns, comparing our restrictions to that of communist China. The doctor must have forgotten that the American people are protected by the Constitution and not governed by the same standards as folks in a dictatorial regime. Dr. Fauci's ignorance to the damage he has caused is still harming this country as we begin to emerge from the pandemic, and it's time for him to go.



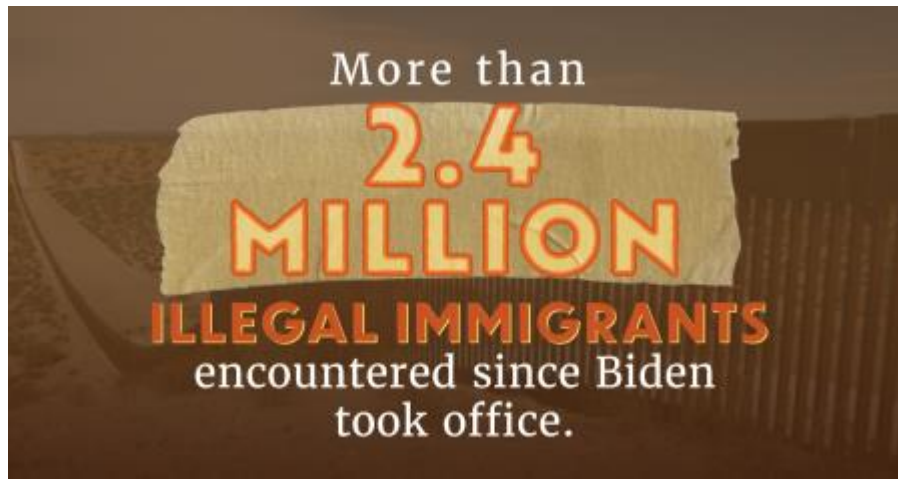
Secretary of Commerce:

The Biden Administration is out of touch with reality. During my questioning of Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, she made the shocking admission that hard-working American families should forget about putting clothes on their kids' backs because climate change was going to kill them. While she claimed that climate change was a long-term threat, she failed to grasp that soaring inflation and skyrocketing gas prices are an immediate threat to the American people. Hard-working folks in the Sixth District cannot simply forget about clothing their kids or putting food on the table. With inflation soaring and gas prices skyrocketing, folks deserve solutions from this Administration, not excuses.



Mayorkas Resignation:

Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas has utterly neglected his duties to protect the American people and fulfill his agency's mission to "secure the nation from the many threats we face." Under Mayorkas' tenure as DHS Secretary, more than 2.4 million illegal immigrants have crossed our border. Further, his Department's open border policies are fueling the opioid epidemic with at least 11,201 pounds of deadly fentanyl coming across our border in FY21 – enough to kill every American nearly seven times over. Failure to take real action to secure the border is having devastating consequences in our communities as more than 71,000 Americans tragically lost their lives from an opioid-related overdose last year, a 23% increase from 2020. Additionally, Secretary Mayorkas is expected to end Title 42, a policy that allowed illegal immigrants to be deported quickly, which will make the immigration crisis even worse. And finally, the Secretary recently established a "Disinformation Governance Board" with the goal of censoring free speech and conservatives online. It is clear that Mayorkas is unfit to serve in this role, which is why my colleagues and I introduced a [resolution](#) calling for his immediate resignation. The American people deserve a Secretary of Homeland Security who is actually committed to protecting our Nation.



Honoring the National Guard:

The Virginia National Guard is a unique dual-status force with a federal mission to provide a combat reserve for the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force to fight our Nation's wars and a state mission to provide a response force that answers the call of the Governor to defend the Commonwealth. The VNG traces the history and tradition of Citizen-Soldier service to the founding of Jamestown in 1607, and there has been a military presence defending Virginia ever since. The VNG's current strength is 7,200 Soldiers, 1,200 Airmen, 300 Virginia Defense Force members, and 400 federal and state civilians.

In January, I was honored to attend the departure ceremony for the Virginia National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, which is currently deployed to Kosovo. The Unit joined a NATO-led peacekeeping force known as KFOR and is tasked with the mission of maintaining a safe and secure environment, protecting the freedom of movement for all citizens in Kosovo, and facilitating the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans. Sixth District Guardsmen and women are joined by soldiers from 28 other countries in helping ensure KFOR's objectives are met. We continue to keep these soldiers in our thoughts and pray for their safe return. As the Virginia National Guard celebrates its 415th birthday this week, let us never forget those who have given their last full measure while wearing our Nation's uniform, those still on the front-lines in places both known and unknown, and the families who are asked to carry the burden while their loved ones are away. May God continue to bless our troops and the United States of America.



Shenandoah Caverns Centennial:

Virginia's Sixth District is home to some of the most beautiful landscapes and natural wonders in the country, including Shenandoah Caverns, which is celebrating its 100-year anniversary. While building the Southern Railroad through Shenandoah County in the 1880s, the rail company asked landowner, Abraham Neff, for permission to dig a rock quarry for stones

to help continue the project. While exploring the quarry, Mr. Neff's sons discovered the caverns after climbing 275 feet down an opening that had been exposed. The family eventually sold the property to Hunter Chapman, who hoped to show the world the marvel that had been uncovered. In 1922, Chapman got his wish when Shenandoah Caverns officially opened - attracting generations of locals and tourists alike. Since then, for the past 100 years, the Caverns have provided stunning views, incredible geology, and extraordinary crystalline formations to all who visited. Shenandoah Caverns is truly remarkable, and I was pleased to congratulate its current owner, Kathy Hargrove Kelly, on the House Floor this week on the business' centennial.



National Police Week:

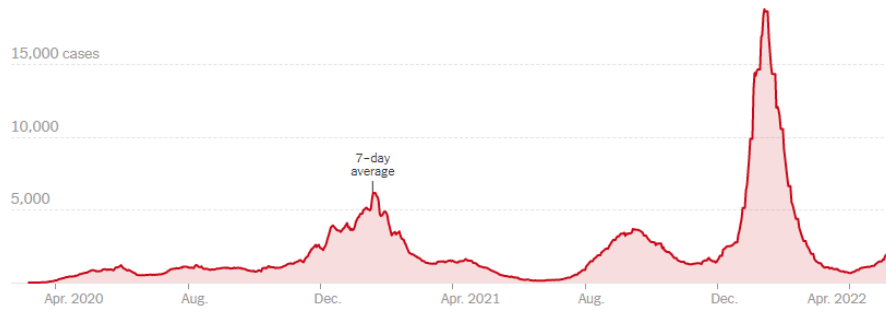
As we celebrate National Police Week, we honor the brave men and women who protect and serve our cities, counties, and states all across the country. Each day, law enforcement officers put on their uniforms knowing of the danger they face, but do so selflessly in an effort to keep their communities safe. Since 1776, more than 25,000 police officers have made the ultimate sacrifice, including 458 just last year. As we also recognize Police Officer's Memorial Day, we particularly remember Bridgewater College Police Officers, John Painter and JJ Jefferson, who were killed in the line of duty while protecting students on campus. People like them, who are willing to lay their own lives down for others, are the reason that we can all sleep soundly at night. And while some seek to vilify the police, I will always Back the Blue. This week we lift all law enforcement officers up and thank them for their overwhelming contributions to society.



COVID-19 Update:

Last week in Virginia there was an average of **28.0** daily cases of COVID-19 per every 100,000 residents. This is up from an average of **18.6** cases from one week prior. This week's

positivity rate was **12.0%**, up from an average of 9.3% last week. 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.

Ben Cline

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