

News From Congressman Ben Cline



## Sixth District Perspectives with Congressman Ben Cline

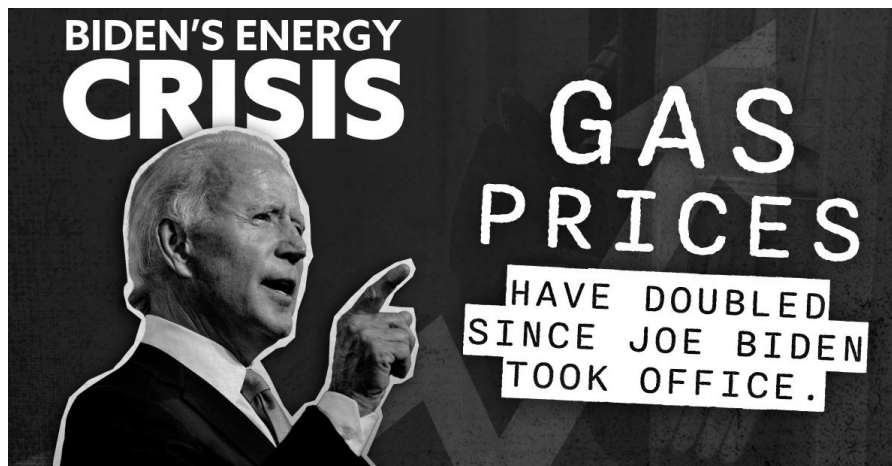
In yet another 40-year high, inflation hit 8.6%, gas prices hover around \$5 per gallon, consumer confidence is nearing historic lows, and interest rates saw the highest single increase since 1994. More signs are pointing toward a recession, and everyday goods and services are costing more or are simply not available. Yet this week Congress debated infrastructure for flying cars rather than deal with shrinking paychecks. Incredibly, in a headline one could find in a satirical newspaper, Democrats on the House Budget Committee held a hearing on how the \$1.9 trillion "American Rescue Plan" saved the economy. As if they live outside reality, some committee members chose to ignore the fact that the ARP is largely responsible for the record-high inflation rate and economic failures we currently are experiencing. However, to ensure academic institutions are properly using federal grant money, I was pleased to introduce the *Federal Grant Accountability Act* this week. On the home front, I recognized the Liberty Christian Academy Bulldogs on the House Floor for winning the VHSL baseball Class 3 state title game. I also met with a number of advocacy groups to hear their thoughts about how Congress can help our District and the Nation. And as we celebrate Juneteenth, let us cherish the freedom that America promises for all.

### **\$5 a Gallon Gas Prices**

In our area, gas prices recently rose **17 cents in a week**. The average driver is paying \$100 or more a month to fill their tanks compared to last year. Nationally, the cost of a gallon of regular gas hovers around \$5 — more than double the cost of \$2.39 when President Biden took office in January 2021. Families who fill up their car 4 times a month are paying anywhere from \$1,200 to \$1,300 more per year than last. The American people and hard-working Virginians are getting hit hard by the Left's assault on American energy.

President Biden's executive actions halting American energy exploration, along with the Green New Deal priorities of Democrats in Congress, have restricted the supply of oil, and as demand increased, the prices have skyrocketed. Instead of reversing course by changing failed policy, President Biden announced he will go to Saudi Arabia, despite calling them a murderous state, and beg them to increase oil production. He also announced the Administration would sell off 45 million barrels of oil from our Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR), which will cost billions to refill. However, considering the United States uses nearly 20 million barrels of oil per day, this action amounts to a band-aid on a gaping wound. Doubling down on the Green New Deal, the President's Climate Czar, John Kerry, said, "We absolutely don't [need to drill for more oil]," and therefore the Administration is indicating they will do little to curb the skyrocketing rise of fuel prices.

We know what works. A few short years ago, America was a net exporter of oil and was energy independent. To get us back to that level, anti-oil politicians must commit to a long-term Congressional commitment to liberate domestic oil production and deregulate oil and energy exploration.



## The Looming Recession

The stock market is down. The American people know what a disaster President Biden and House Democrats' economic policies have been, and they're acting accordingly and expressing the lowest consumer sentiment in a record 50 years of data. The trillions of dollars Democrats and President Biden have spent has in large part caused a 40-year high in inflation, as the CPI rose to 8.6% in May. The Nation is \$30 trillion in debt, and the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) predicts \$1.6 trillion in deficits over the next decade. The Federal Reserve will be forced to continue to raise interest rates, further exacerbating the beleaguered economy, as they raised rates 0.75% this week.

The American economy cannot sustain a federal government that is vacuuming money out of the taxpayers' pockets in the private sector at a record pace. And still today House Democrats will not even propose a budget, much less one that actually achieves balance, and instead they fund the government and devalue the currency through massive omnibus bills and continuing resolutions. The House of Representatives needs to return to regular order and return to fiscal sanity to rescue this economy from the precipice of a recession, and I will continue to be a leader of fiscal responsibility in the House.



*Speaking on the state of the American economy on the House Floor*

### **The Misnamed "American Rescue Plan"**

Far from saving the American economy, the so-called "American Rescue Plan" set this country on a path to 40-year high inflation, skyrocketing debt and deficits, with a Green New Deal energy agenda responsible for \$5 a gallon gas prices. In contrast to the President's claims of a "Putin Price Hike," as the Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell recently testified, in the face of trillions of dollars of government spending, "inflation was high before" the war in Ukraine. In fact, just days after the February 24th invasion, the CPI increased 7.9% in February of 2022, then the largest 12 month increase in 40 years. The \$1.9 trillion tax and spend package amounted to \$13,250 per taxpayer in America. The plan was a bailout to many blue states and cities that have wildly mismanaged their budgets. The Democrats' "American Rescue Plan" used the pandemic as a cover to push their radical economic agenda, and now the American people are and will continue paying the steep price.



*Speaking against the ARP in a recent Budget Committee hearing*

## **The Federal Grant Accountability Act**

Ensuring accountability in the federal grant-making process should be a top priority for Congress. The cost of academic research projects has grown over time, with over \$40 billion in taxpayer-funded grants being awarded by federal agencies. While many higher education institutions use their grant funding appropriately, Congress must ensure that the money received is not used for university slush funds promoting woke, radical ideologies, but rather is used for legitimate and research-oriented purposes. I am pleased to introduce the *Federal Grant Accountability Act* to inject the market and mandated transparency into the grant-making system.



## **Liberty Christian Academy VHSL Baseball Class 3 State Championship**

I was pleased to recognize the Liberty Christian Academy Bulldogs on the House Floor for winning the VHSL baseball Class 3 state title game. The Academy was founded in 1967, and in addition to its academic and biblical teachings, the school excels in sports. Their baseball state title this year marked their second state crown, as they won the 4A state title in 2017.

This game all came down to the 7th inning at the field in Spotsylvania, Virginia. Their opponent, the Abingdon Falcons, had taken the lead in the top of the seventh when Lane Duff of the Academy walked three straight batters, sending home Cole Lambert for the go-ahead run. The Falcons scored again on a bases-loaded walk to Jack Ferguson that scored Daniel Fellhauer and made it 5-3. Yet when the Bulldogs got their chance in the bottom of the 7th, they started a rally as Logan Duff led off with a triple. Then a sacrifice fly by Tanner Thomas scored Duff to cut the Abingdon Falcons' lead to 5-4. And then finally, Lane Duff's two-run walk-off single marked a three-run Liberty Christian Academy rally that propelled the Bulldogs to a 6-5 win last Saturday in the coveted VHSL Class 3 state title game. Congratulations to the players, coaches, and parents on a great season.



*Honoring the Liberty Christian Academy baseball team on the House Floor*

## **Meetings With Constituents**



*Meeting with a representative of McKee Foods and members of Family Enterprise USA*



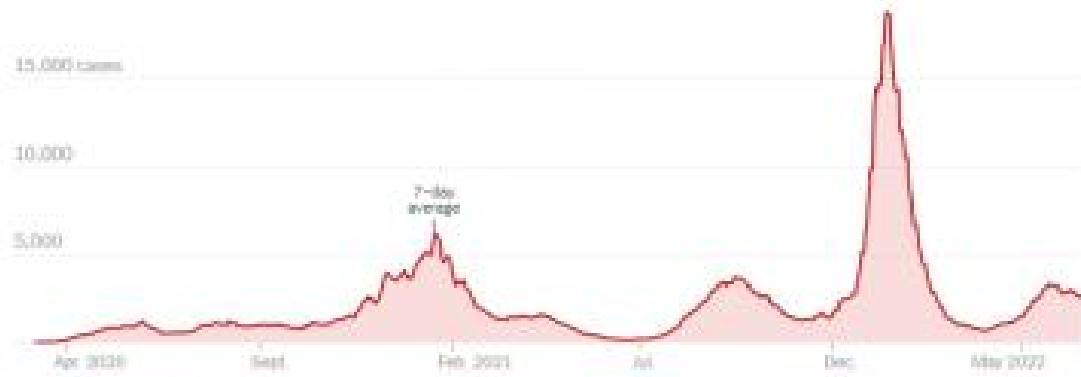
*Meeting with students of the Future Farmers of America (FFA)*



*Meeting with members of the National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB)*

## **COVID-19 Update**

Last week in Virginia there was an average 30 daily cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 residents, down from 34 daily cases last week. This week's COVID-19 test positivity rate remained at 17%. 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 Clive*

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