

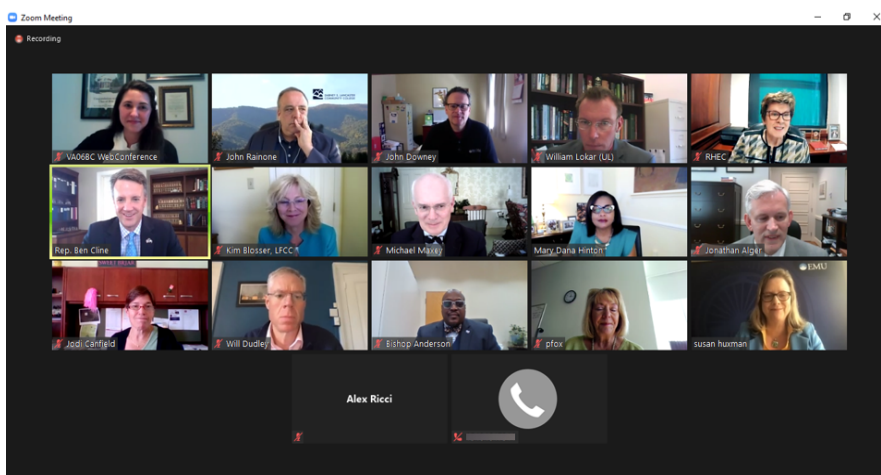


Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

As fall arrives there are few more beautiful places than Virginia's Sixth District. I thoroughly enjoyed being home and having the opportunity to meet with constituents and listen to their thoughts and concerns. In Front Royal, I met with members of the American Legion Post 53, and in Salem and Roanoke, I talked with folks from VDOT and then received donations at a local food bank. This week I also hosted a virtual higher education roundtable with academic leaders from across our region, as well as chatted via Zoom with our District's nominee for the Angels in Adoption program. And while I may be home in Virginia, please know I will keep you apprised should there be any update relating to COVID-19 relief legislation in the coming weeks. In the meantime, I look forward to meeting with those I am honored to represent as I continue traversing the Sixth District.

Second Annual Higher Education Round Table:

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 on the House Education and Labor Committee. That is why I hosted my Second Annual Higher Education Roundtable, which was attended by representatives from 15 schools throughout the District. We discussed a wide array of topics ranging from college affordability, 21st century learning, and of course, how their institutions are adapting to meet the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. A common theme echoed by many of the school officials was appreciation for Congress' creation of the Paycheck Protection Program as well as expressing their desire that any future coronavirus legislation include liability protections for their institutions to safeguard against frivolous lawsuits. It was a thorough and thoughtful conversation, and I hope to continue these sorts of productive forums in the future.



Improving Infrastructure:

The Sixth District is in dire need of resources to modernize its aging infrastructure and relieve the congestion bottlenecks that afflict our highways - particularly Interstate-81. That's why over the past two years I have advocated for Federal funding for our area by testifying before the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and also by speaking on the House Floor. I will continue to fight for our District's fair share of Federal funding throughout the duration of my tenure in Congress, and for this reason, I have been meeting regularly with regional administrators from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to better understand the specific needs of our area. Just this week I met with VDOT engineers at the Regional Traffic Operations Center in Salem to discuss the importance of improving safety measures along the I-81 corridor. Further, it was great to see the outstanding work they are already doing to make much-needed improvements to our area highways and bridges.



Angels in Adoption:

Each year, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) accepts nominations for individuals, families, or organizations across the Nation who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the lives of children in need of permanent, loving homes. The individuals nominated by Members of Congress and then selected from across the country by CCAI are bestowed with the title "Angels in Adoption" for their work. This year I had the honor of nominating the Janney family from Roanoke, who have become tireless advocates for adoption after bringing their daughter into their home two years ago. This week, I had the privilege of meeting with the Janneys to discuss their journey and greatly appreciated their suggestions on how Congress can cut red-tape in regard to international adoption to help bring families together in a timelier manner.



American Legion:

This week I was pleased to join folks at the Giles B. Cook American Legion Post 53, in Front Royal, to accept a Certificate of Appreciation for my office successfully resolving an issue the Post was having with a federal agency. I share this not to highlight the award, but to use this opportunity to remind Sixth District residents that my office is always available should you require any assistance when dealing with the federal government. The dedicated caseworkers in my District offices are committed to aiding constituents while navigating the federal bureaucracy. For more information, please visit my [website](#) or call any of my District offices listed at the bottom of this page.



Feeding the Hungry:

On Thursday, I joined volunteers at the Feeding Southwest Virginia in Roanoke to receive a 20,000lb donation of non-perishable food made by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The church also made an identical donation to the Rockbridge Christmas Basket Program. Our community is forever grateful for this generosity, which will aid countless families in need.



Supporting Local Farmers and Ranchers:

Since being sworn into Congress, I have worked to support those in the agriculture industry, which is why I recently cosponsored the *Processing Revival and Intrastate Meat Exemption (PRIME) Act*. This legislation would make it easier for small farms and ranches to serve local consumers during the COVID-19 pandemic by giving individual states the ability to allow intrastate distribution of meat processed in custom-exempt facilities such as beef, pork, or lamb to consumers and grocery stores. Though many farmers and ranchers are able to maintain normal production levels at the moment, bottlenecks and disruptions in the food supply chain has made distribution to everyday consumers incredibly challenging. Currently, in order to sell individual cuts of locally-raised meats to consumers, farmers and ranchers must first send their animals to one of a limited number of USDA or federally-compliant slaughterhouses. These slaughterhouses are sometimes hundreds of miles away, which adds substantial transportation and labor costs, makes workers more vulnerable, and subjects the entire supply system to major disruptions should an outbreak occur in a plant or its surrounding region. The *PRIME Act* would expand the current custom exemption, and allow states to empower small farms, ranches, and slaughterhouses to reduce waste and provide much-needed food to communities here in Virginia and across the nation.



COVID-19:

Last week, the White House and Congressional Republicans tried to strike a COVID-19 relief deal with Speaker Pelosi for \$1.6 trillion, but she refused to negotiate in good faith. Instead, she forced through a bloated, partisan \$2.2 trillion bill that barely passed when 18 of my Democrat colleagues voted alongside Republicans against the measure. This was after Senate Democrats blocked two relief bills that would have provided immediate aid to the American people. In an effort to provide targeted relief to those struggling, the President has urged Congress to send him standalone bills that he could sign such as authorizing another round of \$1,200 Emergency Relief Checks and extending the Paycheck Protection Program. It is my hope that Speaker Pelosi will put people above politics and bring individual legislation like this to the House Floor.

Economic Impact Payments:

The IRS announced this week that the deadline to register for an Economic Impact Payment, also known as an Emergency Relief Check, is now November 21, 2020. This new date will provide an additional five weeks beyond the original deadline. The IRS urges people who don't typically file a tax return – and haven't received an Economic Impact Payment – to register as quickly as possible using the Non-Filer Tool [here](#). More information can be found at [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov).



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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