

Special Report on the Border from Yuma, Arizona: Sixth District Perspectives With Congressman Ben Cline

Sixth District Perspectives
with Congressman Ben Cline

Special Report from the Southwest Border

I spent three days last week at the U.S.-Mexico border near Yuma, Arizona, and having visited the Southern border on two previous occasions, I again saw firsthand the detrimental impact that the nonexistent current border policy has had on our law enforcement, border patrol, and entire communities in the region. It was heartbreaking to hear from personnel on the ground about how the Biden administration's illegal immigration policy failures have wreaked havoc on Yuma, as well as every community in the Sixth District of Virginia and across the country. Unfortunately, much like the President, Judiciary Committee Democrats were a no-show, calling our visit a "political stunt." If they would have attended, they would have witnessed border wall construction and gaps, and heard about the strain the crisis is having on medical care, food supplies, and law enforcement. Additionally, the Committee held a hearing to listen to the concerns of the officials on the ground and their thoughts on the current border policy and how it can be fixed. It was time well spent, and I am sorry that my Democrat colleagues chose not to participate.

Finish the Wall: San Luis Port of Entry to the Morelos Dam

No matter which sector of the border I visit, the constant message I hear from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials is that walls work. Unfortunately, on day one of his administration, President Biden halted construction of any wall and invited the historic influx of illegal migration into our country. That's why our first stop was a night-time tour in the Cocopah Indian Reservation in San Luis, Arizona, to the Morelos Dam sector of the border. We were troubled by the gaps in the wall and were told by officials that urgent funding was needed to close the holes not only in physical fencing, but also in the broken system that is overflowing with illegals. The numbers are even worse when you're on the ground and experiencing it firsthand. In the Yuma sector alone, there were 100,000 border encounters during Biden's first year in office -- and 300,000 last year -- compared to 8,000 during the last year of the Trump administration. Overall, in the southwest border zone there have been 874,449 crossings in FY23 so far, and in Arizona specifically, there were 571,482 in FY22, and 185,885 in this fiscal year so far. And Arizona's problems have become Virginia's problems, as there's been a reported near-270,000 illegal immigrants moving into in Virginia -- which amounts to roughly

one-third the population of the entire Sixth District. The border is flat-out being overrun. In fact, once we left for the night, over 200 migrants illegally crossed the section. It's time for action.



Congressman Ben Cline
@RepBenCline

Last night, @JudiciaryGOP was at the border in Yuma, AZ.

No matter how many times @SecMayorkas tries to avoid the truth, the border is WIDE OPEN for migrants to illegally come into the U.S. In fact, OVER 200 crossed in this area after we left.

Don't believe me? Watch this [+](#)



See my video footage of the night border wall visit and the gaps [here](#)

Yuma Hospital

On day 2 of our visit, we met with officials from the Yuma hospital and listened to them highlight the enormous financial burden they're facing from the overflow of illegal migrants coming across the border, and far too often into their hospital. The CEO of the hospital stressed the strain this crisis is having on their medical system, saying there aren't enough beds to care for residents in Yuma because migrants have caused the hospital to reach max capacity. The hospital has spent over \$20 million to care for illegal migrants, and there's a similar financial squeeze on Virginia's medical system. According to the Virginia Department of Health, fatal opioid overdoses increased roughly 260% in the last decade from 2011-21, and in 2020, three out of every four overdoses were caused by fentanyl. In 2021, Virginia had a 15% increase in overdoses from 2020, with synthetic fentanyl being the cause of most deaths, 2,033. The simple fact is the health of the American people has been compromised by Biden's border crisis -- and it needs to be stopped.






Meeting with medical officials and hospital personnel in the Yuma Hospital boardroom

Local Food Bank

Next we saw the Yuma community food bank and heard from community members about the impact that the historic surge of illegals has had on the food supply, farmers and producers, schools and the transportation system.



Congressman Ben Cline 
@RepBenCline

Just heard from the local food bank in Yuma, AZ about the devastating impact of [#BidensBorderCrisis](#) on the community— from farmers to schools to everything in between.

One thing is clear: we must SECURE THE BORDER and get this crisis under control NOW.



 House Judiciary GOP

[Watch](#) my reflections from outside the food bank

The Burden on Law Enforcement

We must support those on the front line with all they need to best handle the influx across our border. Law enforcement officials from across surrounding communities in Arizona all relayed to us that the border crisis is putting a strain on their resources at a time when protecting and serving citizens is most critical. Near to home in recent times, we've been reminded of this horror when just south of us, a fentanyl trafficker in Abingdon was caught distributing 30,000 "pressed" fentanyl pills. In West Virginia, officers in Morgantown confiscated a "large batch" of rainbow-colored fentanyl pills, targeting our children. The sheriffs talked about the dangers of the cartels smuggling fentanyl and illicit drugs into the Nation and confirmed what we all knew: this crisis was created because of open border policies and blanket amnesty.



I was honored to meet with sheriffs and community members from all across Arizona, who attended the House Judiciary Committee's field hearing.

Hearing From Those Most Impacted

Committee Democrats and Biden administration officials would have benefited from the hearing in Yuma. Here's what we learned: Yuma County Supervisor Jonathan Lines testified new numbers he has received show 48 percent of fentanyl being seized at the southern border was caught being smuggled between the ports of entry, with the rest being seized at a port of entry. Dr. Robert Trenschel, president and CEO of the Yuma Regional Medical Center (the only hospital in Yuma) testified U.S. citizens have had to wait longer to receive care because the hospital had to prioritize

illegal immigrants due to their health problems being more severe -- and the audience knew that fact all too well. Further, Dr. Trenchel stated they have had to send U.S. citizens whose babies were needing to be in the neonatal intensive care unit to Phoenix (over 170 miles away) because Yuma's NICU was full due to the influx of migrant mothers. Whether it's the surge of illegals coming from the southern border heading northeast or the impact of the open border and amnesty policies from the Biden administration in Washington, the squeeze on the Sixth District is real. Rest assured, I'm doing all in my power to blunt the tide of this crisis and restore the rule of law at our border.



Congressman Ben Cline 
@RepBenCline

Dangerous drug cartels have ABUSED our immigration laws & ERUPTED VIOLENCE in our communities.

The Biden administration has turned a blind eye to this destruction that its failed policies have caused on our country & every American should be furious.



[Watch my speech](#) and questioning in the Judiciary Committee field hearing in the city hall chambers of Yuma, Arizona

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