

News From Congressman Ben Cline



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Most would assume that the rules governing procedure in the House of Representatives do not directly affect them. However, that is not the case in the 117th Congress. Democrats implemented a rule change earlier this year that allows them to bring any bill that passed last Congress to the Floor prior to April 1st without having to go through the committee process first. This has resulted in bills being passed in the House with little opportunity for Republicans to amend the legislation. That is how two overreaching gun control bills and a pro union, freedom crushing bill passed this week - all of which I opposed.

Further Democrats continue to fail the American people as they passed a \$1.9 trillion spending package that does little to actually combat COVID-19 while driving our nation deeper into debt. On top of this, the Biden Administration has failed to act and is allowing the immigration crisis at our southern border to grow without any action to curb it. It was a frustrating legislative week, but I will continue fighting on behalf of Sixth District residents.

Defending the Second Amendment:

I was sent to Washington to uphold and defend the Constitution. I will not stand by and allow our rights to be stripped away, which is what the House Majority tried to do this week as they passed H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446. These bills continue the systematic and coordinated attempt by the Democratic Party to undermine our Second Amendment rights. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that these bills will save lives. However, nothing in them would have stopped any of the recent mass casualty shootings that have occurred in our country. Rather than go after criminals who break the law - Democrats want to create a false narrative that will criminalize private gun ownership. Democrats will tell you that these bills close loopholes. However, the loophole that they believe exists is that law-abiding Americans are able to own guns - though it would appear that the left has no issue with illegal immigrants owning a firearm considering they rejected my amendment which would require ICE to be notified if an illegal immigrant tries to unlawfully purchase a gun. The sole objective of this gun control package is to remove constitutional safeguards and put in place criminal penalties that would unjustly go after responsible gun owners. The Second Amendment is crystal clear that the right to bear

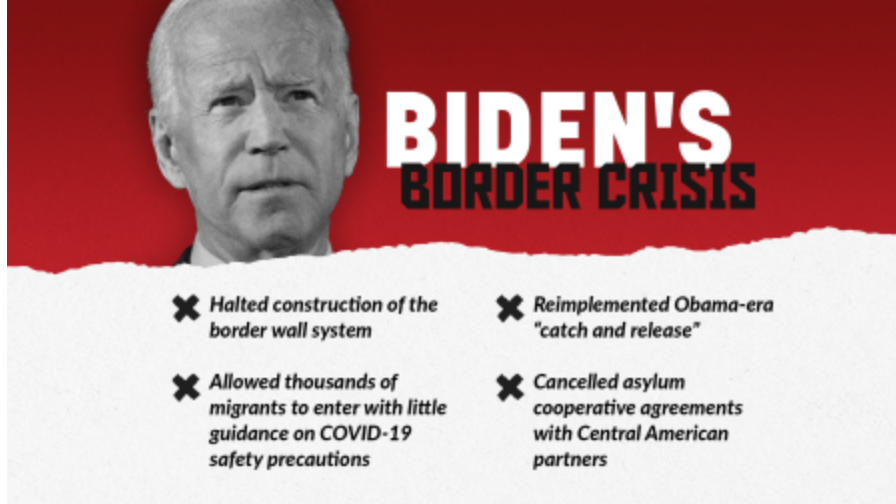
arms shall not be infringed. Our Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution to protect us from the government and gave individuals the Second Amendment to protect themselves and their families. These outrageous proposals vastly restrict our freedoms, and I voted NO.



Immigration Crisis:

On day one of his Presidency, Biden had no plan for opening up our Nation and schools, but he did have an idea as to opening up our borders to illegal immigration. And regardless of how the Biden Administration spins it, there's an unmitigated illegal immigration crisis at the southern border. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) tell us unverified family unit claims on the border are up 400% since the inauguration and the number of individual migrants who have illegally crossed the border this year has already topped 200,000 - a seven-year high and a 173% increase from this time last year. Further, HHS facilities are already overflowed as they take in an average 321 unaccompanied children a day compared to 203 just a few weeks ago. There is simply no denying that this is a crisis.

To make matters worse, the President of the United States, for the first time in our history, is actively encouraging felonious law-breaking on our southern border that is now a humanitarian, economic, and national security crisis — and the new Administration is showing no signs of ceasing aiding and abetting illegal immigration. Worse yet, Democrats in Congress are complicit in fueling this calamity. That is why this week I wrote to the Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee urging that she hold hearings and work together with Republicans to gather the facts about the current situation on the border and develop solutions to address this crisis. I am going to do everything in my power here in Congress to secure our borders and champion the American way of only allowing, welcoming, and celebrating legal immigration. Read the full letter to Chairwoman DeLauro [here](#).



PRO Act:

I was disappointed this week as Speaker Pelosi and her caucus passed the *PRO Act*, which would more appropriately be titled the *PRO Union Bosses Act*. This bill is nothing more than a political gift to labor unions at the expense of workers, small businesses, entrepreneurs, and consumers. H.R. 842 would wipe-out right-to-work laws in 27 states, including here in Virginia. This bill undermines worker rights, traps employers in unrelated labor disputes, wreaks havoc on the economy, and forces Americans to join a union. No one should ever be forced to join a union simply to hold a job or be required to pay dues toward an organization that doesn't share their values. This country was founded on the principle that every American deserves the right to create their own success from their own hard work, but at its core this bill strips citizens of their liberty. As our Founding Father and fellow Virginian Thomas Jefferson said, "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical." I voted against this misguided legislation.



Biden Bailout:

Our families, our farmers, and our small businesses need our continued support as we navigate this COVID pandemic and work to reopen our economy, but they don't need a \$1.9 trillion package that is riddled with Democrat pork. More egregious than the reckless spending in the bill is the fact that only 9% of the funding authorized within the legislation will actually go toward combating the coronavirus through enhanced vaccine production and testing. Additionally, the bill fails to prioritize getting kids back in the classroom and of the \$130 billion authorized to help reopen schools, only 5% will be spent in 2021. This bill is unacceptable and literally pays people to stay home rather than going to work.

While I could support additional relief to help get folks back to work and kids back in school, any further aid must be targeted, temporary, and actually tied to COVID. Not only is this legislation packed with wasteful spending unrelated to COVID and bailouts for blue states like New York and California, but with more than \$1 trillion in previously authorized coronavirus funds still unspent, it is premature. The Biden Bailout as a whole is wasteful, partisan, and

deeply flawed. For these reasons, I voted no on this bill. A few of the most egregious provisions unrelated to COVID contained in this legislation are listed below:

- \$350 billion to bailout blue states that have mismanaged their pensions and other programs for years
- \$12 billion in foreign aid
- \$1.5 billion for Amtrak
- \$135 million for the National Endowment of the Arts
- \$135 million for the National Endowment of the Humanities
- \$50 million in funding for EPA environmental justice grants
- \$10 million in grants to preserve Native American languages

Listen In!



State Champions:

This week I took the House Floor to recognize Parry McCluer High School's boys indoor track and field team for once again winning the Virginia Class 1 State championship. This victory marks back-to-back State titles for this incredibly talented squad led by Coach Poluikis. After the Fighting Blues graduated a number of their starters last year, Poluikis wasn't sure if his team could go the distance. With only five Blues competing at the State tournament he said, "I knew we could win, but everything had to go perfect." And everything did go perfectly.

Trevor Tomlin swept the 1,600 and 3,200. Brenden Plogger won the 1,000, and Zavery Wallace took the shot put. Kedryn Chandler contributed points with a second-place finish in the 3,200 and a third-place finish in the 1,600, while Omar Massenberg added points in the shot put. When all was said and done, Parry McCluer had come out with a two-point lead over runners-up Altavista. This win was made all the more impressive by the fact that all of the team's 58 points were scored in just four events. Congratulations to this Fighting Blues team on a remarkable season. You have earned it.



COVID-19 Update:

As of March 14, 2021, Virginia has had 594,735 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 10,019. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of March 13th, 1,713,722 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 974,837 people are fully vaccinated.

With 31 million Americans fully vaccinated against COVID-19, the CDC released new guidelines for individuals who have been inoculated. The CDC has suggested that those who are vaccinated can:

- Visit with other fully vaccinated people indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Visit with unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19 disease indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure to COVID-19 if asymptomatic



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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