
SIXTH DISTRICT PERSPECTIVES WITH CONGRESSMAN BEN CLINE

News From Congressman Ben Cline



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Following a productive District Work Period where I met with constituents and toured a number of businesses, the House gaveled back into session on Tuesday. I continue to monitor the crisis on our southern border and in a subcommittee hearing this week, I questioned HHS Secretary Becerra about the Administration's lack of a plan to address the worsening crisis. Additionally, the Majority introduced a reckless bill to add four Justices to the Supreme Court, which should be of grave concern to all Americans. However, in a moment of bipartisanship, fellow members of the Problem Solvers Caucus and I wrote to House Leadership urging an end to the practice of going around congressional rules to pass legislation. Further, the House

passed a number of bipartisan bills to aid small businesses that are struggling. While it was a busy week, I always appreciate the opportunity to advocate for those I am honored to represent here in Washington.

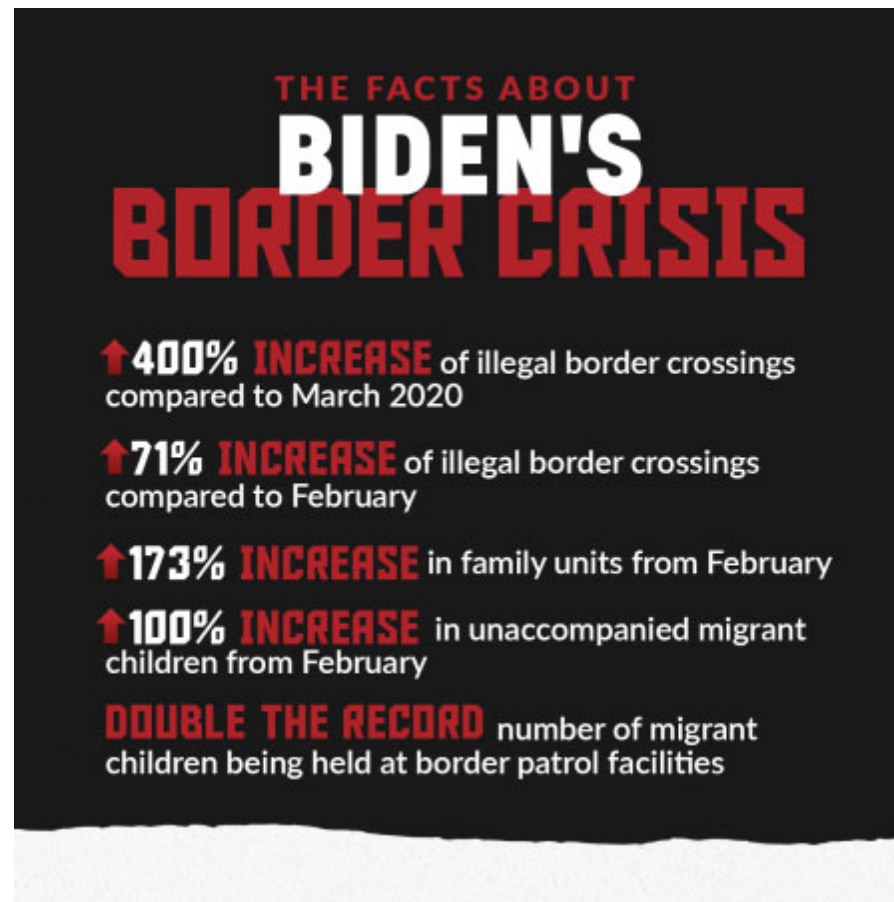
Trivium Packaging:

Trivium Packaging has facilities all over the world, including a manufacturing plant in Roanoke, which employs 125 area residents. This company delivers innovative and sustainable metal packaging to help leading brands protect their products and stand out. And since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Trivium has been essential in ensuring our shelves remain stocked by supplying packaging to America's food and beverage industries. This week, before my return to Washington, I enjoyed the opportunity to tour the plant and see their innovative work firsthand, as well as hear from management and staff about how Congress can help them continue to grow.



Disorder at the Border:

This week, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) released new data regarding the crisis at our border. Last month alone, more than 170,000 migrants illegally crossed our border, which is a 400 percent increase from March of last year and a 71 percent increase from February. This now means more than 350,000 migrants have tried to cross the border in 2021. Further, there are double the record number of unaccompanied minors in custody, which currently stands at 20,000+ between CBP and HHS holding facilities. To make matters worse, the President's \$1.52 trillion budget proposal includes a zero percent funding increase for the Department of Homeland Security to help CBP do their jobs effectively. Finally, the President has tasked Vice-President Harris as the de facto "Border Czar," yet she has yet to visit our border to see the crisis firsthand. This Administration must address this worsening humanitarian and economic crisis.



Protecting Life:

A baby born alive, even after an attempted abortion, should be afforded the same constitutional protections as every other American. That's why, this week, I joined my GOP colleagues in signing a discharge petition to force a vote on the *Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act*. This legislation would require health care practitioners who are present at the live birth of a child following a failed abortion to exercise skill, care, and diligence to preserve the life and health of the baby—the same degree of care that would be offered to any other child born prematurely of the same gestational age. After those efforts, the health care workers must transport and admit the child to a hospital. Further, it requires health care practitioners and hospital employees to report violations to law enforcement authorities, thus reducing the number of born-alive abortions that go unreported. It also penalizes the intentional killing of a born-alive child by a physician through fines or up to 5 years imprisonment. Protecting living and breathing babies outside of the womb should not be a partisan issue. However, since Speaker Pelosi has refused to call this bill for a vote, I am hopeful that the discharge petition will garner the 218 signatures necessary to trigger an immediate vote on the House Floor.



Regular Order:

With narrow majorities in the House and Senate, we need bipartisan support and solutions to get bills passed in both houses and ultimately signed into law by the President. The best way to do this is by having a deliberative and open process that promotes transparency and allows

members to help shape legislation through committee hearings, markups, and Floor amendments. Unfortunately, with a majority of only six seats, Speaker Pelosi has been rushing bills to the Floor, bypassing committees, and limiting amendments. This is not how the legislative process should work, and I recently joined my colleagues in the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus in writing to House leadership urging a return to regular order. Doing so will make for a higher functioning representative government that truly works for the American people. To read the letter, click [here](#).

Court Packing:

This week, President Biden launched a commission to study expanding the Supreme Court and House Judiciary Chairman Jerry Nadler introduced legislation to increase the number of Justices from 9 to 13. This is ridiculous and packing the Supreme Court simply because one party doesn't like the current makeup or is seeking revenge for past appointments is as reckless as it gets. This would set a wildly dangerous precedent and be detrimental to the American Justice System. Democrats are showing their willingness to dismantle our institutions simply to consolidate power. Throughout modern history, the idea of packing the court has been viewed as nonsensical even by prominent members of the Democrat Party and the High Court's most liberal Justices. Hopefully, the House Majority will listen to the words of those that came before them.

- When President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose portrait is prominently displayed above the fireplace in President Biden's Oval Office, attempted to pack the Supreme Court to push his political agenda, Democrats in 1937 argued this plan should be so ["emphatically rejected that its parallel will never again be presented"](#).
- Then-Senator Joe Biden warned in 1983 that [court packing could "put in question, if for an entire decade, the independence of the most significant body...in this country, the Supreme Court of the United States of America."](#)
- Justice Ruth Bader [Ginsburg said](#): "There are some people on the Democratic side who would like to increase the number of judges. I think that was a bad idea...if anything would make the court appear partisan."
- Justice Steven [Breyer said recently](#): "Structural alteration [to the Court] motivated by the perception of political influence can only feed that perception, further eroding that trust."

Fighting for Small Businesses:

This week, I was pleased that the House considered a number of pieces of legislation to aid small businesses. Far too many mom and pop shops have been forced to close their doors this past year, and Congress continues to work to assist those in need. I am hopeful that the legislation listed below, all of which I voted in favor of and passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support, will serve as lifelines to the small business community and help them keep their doors open as many still face hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **H.R. 1502 - *Microloan Improvement Act of 2021***

H.R. 1502 builds on the strengths of the Microloan Program by introducing flexibility and more features for small dollar borrowers to utilize as they move through the Microloan lending process.

- **H.R. 1487 - *Microloan Transparency and Accountability Act of 2021***

H.R. 1487 requires the SBA to perform an annual portfolio risk analysis of the Microloan Program to examine defaults and charge off rates to ensure taxpayer money is safeguarded.

- **H.R. 1490 - *504 Modernization and Small Manufacturer Enhancement Act of 2021***

H.R. 1490 modernizes the 504/CDC (Certified Development Company) Loan Program and enhances how the program assists small manufacturers by increasing the loan amount and resource availability. The legislation also streamlines the complicated 504 Loan Program closing process for small businesses.

- **H.R. 1482 - *504 Credit Risk Management Improvement Act of 2021***

The *504 Credit Risk Management Improvement Act* strengthens the oversight capabilities of the SBA as it pertains to the 504 Loan Program.

Congressional Art Competition:

This week, my office announced its participation in the 2021 Congressional Art Competition. The Congressional Art Competition is sponsored by the Members of the U.S. House of Representatives and is an opportunity to recognize and encourage the artistic talent in the Sixth Congressional District of Virginia. The competition is open to all high school students in the District and the winning artwork will be displayed for one year in the U.S. Capitol alongside other pieces from across the country. For more information including rules, deadlines, and submission requirements, visit my website [here](#). Emily McClung of Lexington was the Sixth District's 2020 winner, and her painting "Lemonade," featured below, currently hangs in the U.S. Capitol.





COVID-19 Update:

As of April 17, 2021, Virginia has had 644,828 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 10,564. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of April 17th, 3,345,853 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 2,059,882 people are fully vaccinated.



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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