

News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN
BEN CLINE



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Last week, the Biden Budget proposal finally arrived on Capitol Hill, and several of his Cabinet Secretaries appeared before the House Appropriations Committee to defend it. This is one of the few times these officials face questioning from Members of Congress, so I used my opportunity to press them on some of the more misguided policies of the new Administration. Further, I recently joined my colleagues in writing to Vice President Harris, who was tasked by President Biden with addressing the crisis at our southern border, calling for previously appropriated funds to continue to be used for border security. Additionally, I was pleased to support new legislation to ensure military spouses have access to employment opportunities. Finally, I met with a number of constituents and students to listen to their concerns and to find out what issues they care most about. Next week it is back to Washington to advocate on behalf of the Sixth District as we head into another two weeks of legislative business.

Protecting the Second Amendment:

In his first 100 days, President Biden has used Executive Actions to infringe on the Second Amendment and moved to strip law-abiding citizens of their ability to protect themselves and their families from harm. One of his most egregious acts is his nomination of David Chipman to lead the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF). Throughout his career, Mr. Chipman has made clear that he opposes the Second Amendment and has proposed banning one of the most popular rifles in the United States, made false claims about suppressors, and is on the record having made entirely false statements regarding the tragedy in Waco, Texas - a case in which he was involved. He is the entirely wrong person to lead the ATF, and on Monday, my

colleagues and I wrote a letter to Senate Leadership urging them to oppose his nomination. To read the letter, click [here](#).

This week, I also had the opportunity to question the Attorney General during his testimony before the Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies. I asked him several questions relating to this Administration's stance on the Second Amendment. I inquired about the Justice Department's position on a case pending before the Supreme Court that could effectively prevent law-abiding citizens from carrying a firearm for self-defense, I asked about whether the \$100 million the DOJ was requesting to fund a "buyback" program would essentially be used to confiscate guns, and questioned the double standard of the Biden Administration's support of requiring a government-issued ID for folks to practice their constitutional right to own a firearm but not their constitutional right to vote. The Attorney General's answers were concerning, but know that I will continue to fight to protect the Second Amendment rights of all Americans for however long I am blessed with the opportunity to serve in Congress.



Biden's Education Priorities:

Rather than pursuing the unfair practice of canceling student debt, we must look at ways to make college more affordable. Last Congress I offered an amendment that would have provided necessary reforms by returning much of the administrative oversight power to the states, increased accountability and transparency, and pushed down the rising cost of tuition. This week, I asked the Secretary of Education his thoughts on the matter.



Questioning the Commerce Secretary:

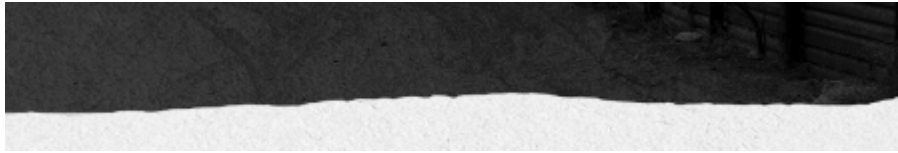
Over the last year, the cost of construction materials has skyrocketed. Oriented strand board (OSB) has jumped over **250%** per sheet in price since March 2020. What had been \$8 is now over \$65 and R-19 insulation was \$28 per roll and today it is over \$50 and climbing. This spike is adding thousands of dollars to the costs of new homes contributing to a buying panic around the country. This week, among other issues, I asked the Secretary of Commerce what resources have been dedicated by her Department to look into the causes of skyrocketing lumber prices and what impact this is having on the economy.



Build the Wall:

When President Biden took office he immediately halted construction of the border wall and froze more than \$1 billion that had been appropriated by Congress to fund this project. Not only is this a potential violation of the *Impoundment Control Act*, which limits a president's ability to withhold congressionally authorized funds, but it is a terrible decision as illegals continue to flow across the border in record numbers. I recently joined my colleagues in writing to Vice President Harris calling for previously appropriated funds for border security to be used immediately to address this crisis. Click [here](#) to read the letter.





Connecting With Students:

Since taking office, it has been a priority of mine to meet with students across the Sixth District. As they prepare for the next steps in their lives, whether that be continuing their education, entering the workforce, or joining the military I wish to instill in them the importance of service to others. This week, I visited Stonewall Jackson High School in Quicksburg and enjoyed answering students' questions about the issues that are important to them. I also spoke virtually with students at Valley Elementary School and Millboro Elementary School in Bath County to discuss how the legislative process works. As more schools begin to reopen for in-person learning, I look forward to meeting with students and fostering the value of public service.



Stonewall Jackson High School



Valley Elementary School and Millboro Elementary School

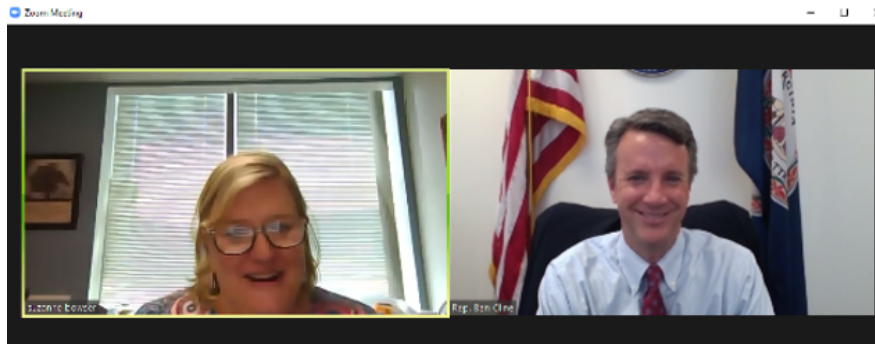
Supporting Military Families:

As we celebrated Military Spouse Appreciation Day on Friday, I was pleased to announce my support for H.R. 2974, the *Military Spouse Hiring Act*. Military spouses experience unemployment of almost 30% and regular moves present a challenge to finding and keeping a job. This legislation expands the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to include the hiring of qualified military spouses, allowing employers to claim a tax credit equal to a portion of the wages paid to those spouses. Providing an incentive for businesses to hire these unsung heroes is the right thing to do and a great way to honor their sacrifices.

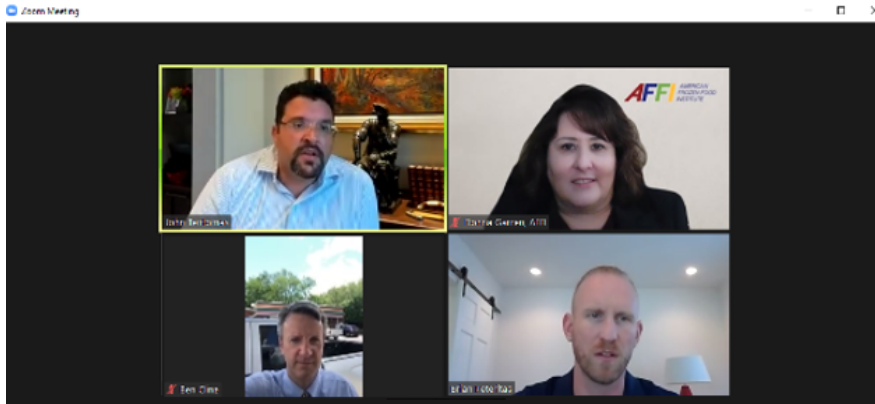


Constituent Meetings:

Regardless of whether I'm in Washington or home in the Sixth District, I always make time to meet with constituents. This week I met with several Sixth District residents to discuss the issues that matter most to them. Among the many groups I met with this week were the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the American Frozen Food Institute. As the Commonwealth slowly reopens, I look forward to meeting with constituents in person whenever I can. If you would like to schedule a meeting with me or my staff, please do not hesitate to reach out to one of my offices listed at the bottom of this page.



Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation



American Frozen Food Institute

COVID-19 Update:

As of May 9, 2021, Virginia has had 666,650 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 10,895. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of May 9th, 3,986,885 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 2,955,864 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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