

News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN
BEN CLINE



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

Although the House did not have any votes on the Floor this week, Speaker Pelosi and her liberal leadership in Washington was busy behind the scenes, working to undermine the fiscal integrity of our Nation by forcing massive spending bills through the House Appropriations Committee. As one of the newest members of the Committee, I was appalled by how quickly the Democrats on the Committee voted for 20 percent, 30 percent, or even bigger increases in spending on Washington bureaucracies over the current fiscal year. Worse, the bills were stuffed full of liberal legislative riders that changed decades of policy with little or no debate. By the end of the week, all twelve appropriations bills were approved by Democrats in party-line votes. Seated in the back corner of the Committee room with the other newly-appointed Republicans, my colleagues and I became known by the Democrats as "the Paper Caucus," because we offered most of the amendments to the bills as they were considered. We offered amendments to reduce spending, defend the Constitution, protect life, and stand against the Green New Deal, among others. While we were unsuccessful in our efforts, the Democrats on the Committee were given notice that the days of doing things "the same old way" are over. Republicans will continue to stand up in Committee for the people we represent against the defenders of the status quo and the Washington bureaucracy.

Further, on Friday, I introduced bipartisan legislation to expand opportunities for veterans and make it easier for them to open their own small business. I also joined Fox Business to discuss my recent appointment to the Big Tech Censorship and Data Task Force, where we'll examine ways to rein in the Tech Industry. Finally, I was pleased that we won a fight against a bureaucratic change at the Office of Management and Budget that would have hurt services

and the people who depend on them across the Sixth District.

Appropriations Committee:

This week, the House Appropriations continued its work of marking up the 12 bills that will fund the Federal government for the next fiscal year. While Republicans worked hard to get provisions included in the bills that support conservative initiatives, the final price tag on each piece of legislation this week was fiscally irresponsible, and most included "poisoning pills" that made it impossible to vote in favor of the bills. A few examples of the issues can be found below:

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies

In one of the most egregious moves by the Democrats, the historically bipartisan Hyde Amendment was removed from the bill for the first time in 45 years. As you may know, the Hyde Amendment ensures that taxpayer dollars are not used to fund or perform abortions – a notion that more than 60 percent of Americans support. Further, this bill also excluded the Weldon Amendment, which ensures that health care providers cannot be forced to provide abortion services – a protection that has been in place since 2005. We should never force our health care workers to participate in an abortion when they have taken an oath to heal and to do no harm. To put a health care provider's license in jeopardy by mandating they perform a procedure they are morally opposed to is simply wrong. For this and many other reasons, I could not vote in favor of this bill.



Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies

Instead of prioritizing security challenges, this bill focused on funding new, overlapping, and potentially duplicative programs. The bill also contained onerous and controversial provisions that would have effectively defunded police who bravely protect and serve our local communities. Additionally, language included for many years to protect the Second Amendment was stripped from the bill. Moreover, the legislation creates a National Gun Buyback Program. The Federal government should not be operating programs that purchase firearms it never owned in the first place from the civilian population. I offered an amendment to remove this provision from the bill and redirect resources at the Justice Department to fight human trafficking. Unfortunately, the Democrats voted it down along party lines. As written, this bill was a bad deal for the taxpayer, and thus, I voted against final passage.





Homeland Security

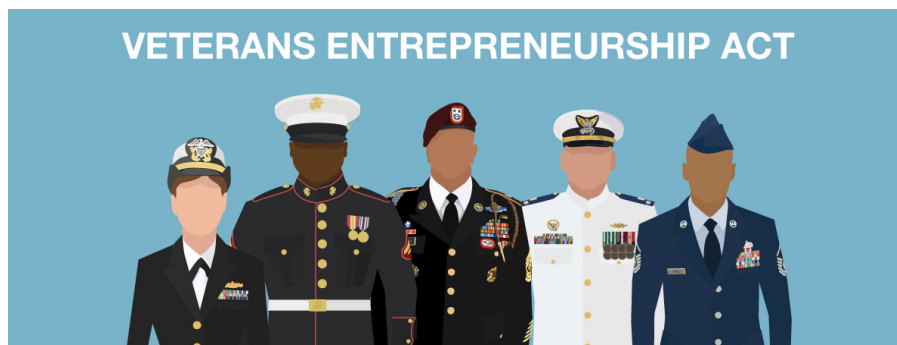
Everyone agrees that we must ensure that those who keep us safe have the resources necessary to do their job, and that includes those who keep us safe on the US border. While there were provisions in the bill that I support, the final legislation did nothing to secure our southern border. Instead, it incentivizes more mass illegal migration that will worsen the crisis at the border created by the Biden Administration. One provision in the bill would even put the locations and types of surveillance technology used by Border Patrol on a website available to the general public (and the Mexican drug cartels). This is dangerous and hinders the work and safety of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. I offered an amendment to strike this reckless provision from this spending bill, but the Democrats voted it down. The legislation did not do nearly enough to secure the homeland, and thus, I could not support the bill.



Veterans Entrepreneurship Act

Supporting Veterans in the Sixth District and across the country is one of my top priorities as your Congressman, and I will continue to work to advance legislation that will aid those who served our Nation. That is why this week I introduced H.R. 4433, the *Veterans Entrepreneurship Act of 2021*. This bipartisan legislation will expand the options under which Veterans can access their benefits in the GI Bill. Currently, GI Bill benefits can only be used to help Veterans further their education. However, not all Veterans wish to continue their education after returning to civilian life. Many wish to pursue professional development, enter the workforce, or start their own small business. This legislation will allow funds under the GI Bill to be applied to special business training programs or resource grants to help Veterans achieve their goals. The bill establishes a 3-year pilot program where 250 Veterans will participate in a training program and receive assistance in putting together a business plan that, if approved, will win them a grant which they can use to realize their plan. The *Veterans Entrepreneurship Act* is grounded in the idea of allowing Veterans to choose how to best use

their earned benefits to help accomplish their goals. Learn more [here](#).



Reining in Big Tech:

Recently, I was pleased to be named to the Big Tech Censorship and Data Task Force. Together we will explore data privacy and security matters, examine competition issues, and most importantly, search for avenues to reform Section 230 of the *Communications Decency Act*.

Section 230 is what gives social media companies their liability shield from lawsuits stemming from the content on their platforms. However, if Big Tech is going to censor speech, remove posts, and filter content, then they should be deemed publishers and no longer entitled to that shield. Further, Big Tech has destroyed the ability of small businesses to compete on a level playing field either by simply buying their competition out, underpricing their own products on their platforms, and giving their own products priority which does not allow private sellers to have a fighting chance. We must help foster a truly free and fair market. Finally, Big Tech too often is reckless and careless in protecting private data, and Congress must work to hold negligent companies liable for these breaches of trust. I am hopeful that this Task Force will be able to work toward solutions to solve these issues.



Metropolitan Statistical Areas:

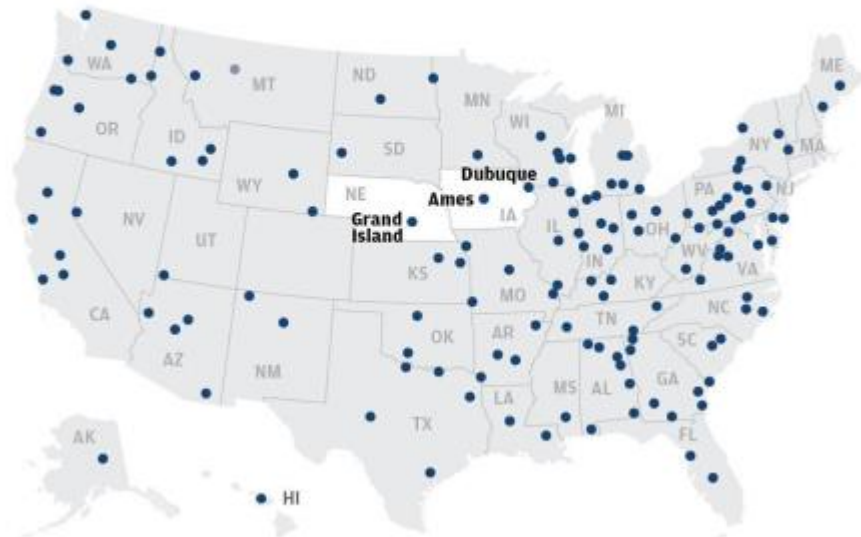
Earlier this year, the Office of Management and Budget proposed raising the population criteria for Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) from 50,000 residents to 100,000 residents. As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, a Metropolitan or Micropolitan Statistical Area is that of a core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of economic and social integration with that core. These designations are used in-part to determine Federal funding levels and economic development opportunities. If this change were to have occurred, cities like Harrisonburg and Staunton would have lost their MSA designation, and thus would not qualify for higher levels of Federal funding. Fortunately, in

response to a letter my colleagues and I wrote to the Office of Management and Budget, the agency announced this week that it is rescinding the proposed change to the population criteria. Therefore, for at least the next ten years, Harrisonburg and Staunton will be afforded the proper level of Federal funding that they deserve. I am proud to have played a part in ensuring this arbitrary proposal did not come to fruition.

144 cities could lose status as metro areas

Under a federal proposal, a metro area would have to have at least 100,000 people compared with the 50,000-person threshold that was implemented more than 70 years ago. The change could affect these 144 cities.

● Selected large metropolitan statistical areas with populations below 100,000 in 2010



Source: Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Area Standards Review Committee

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Scam Alert:

Recently, authorities have been made aware of cyberattacks being perpetrated in the Sixth District. Several residents of Botetourt County have received Facebook messages supposedly from the Economic Development Agency about a grant opportunity, asking for money or personal information in return. Be advised that these messages are scams and can cause serious harm. If you receive a suspicious message, do not click on the link even if it seems to be from someone you know. Please note that the EDA never requires the disclosure of personal information or any processing fees. EDA grants can only be received by following the steps listed on the EDA's website. If you are a victim of one of these scams, contact the [Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General](#) or the [Federal Trade Commission](#).





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 Clive

Washington D.C. Office
2443 Rayburn
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-5431

Harrisonburg Office
70 N Mason St
Suite 110
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
Phone: (540) 432-2391

Lynchburg Office
916 Main St
Suite 300
Lynchburg, VA 24504
Phone: (434) 845-8306

Roanoke Office
10 Franklin Rd SE
Suite 510
Roanoke, VA 24011
Phone: (540) 857-2672

Staunton Office
117 S Lewis St
Suite 215
Staunton, VA 24401
Phone: (540) 885-3861

Please do not reply to this email.
To share your thoughts please visit my [website](#).

[Unsubscribe](#)