

News From Congressman Ben Cline



Sixth District Perspectives *with Congressman Ben Cline*

This week, as the Department of Justice and local school boards seek to stifle parents' First Amendment rights, House Republicans are working legislatively to defend parents' freedom of speech and their ability to act in the best interest of their school-aged children. Republicans are also taking steps to address Biden's avoidable energy and border crises that have caused gas prices to soar and historic levels of illegal migrants to flood into our country. While I will continue to address these issues here in Washington, I had the opportunity to tour several local businesses and meet with constituents earlier in the week. As always, it is a honor to serve our region in the House, and I will continue to ensure Sixth District voices are heard in Congress.

Parental Involvement in Education:

Over the past year, schools have been closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, school board meetings this year have taken on a new importance, as parents express their concerns about continued virtual learning, distress about their children's learning environment and curricula, and their opposition to the teaching of content based on fringe theories such as "CRT," or Critical Race Theory. In response to parents packing local school board meetings, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) sent the Biden Administration a letter where they labeled parents who were worried about their children's education, as "domestic terrorists." While the NSBA has apologized for the letter, the Department of Justice used it as an excuse to take the unprecedented step of implementing, "a series of measures designed to address the rise in criminal conduct directed toward school personnel." Shockingly, the Justice Department will be investigating parents in an attempt to intimidate them as they speak up for their kids.

Parents should always be involved in their kids' education, and threatening them with federal investigations for exercising their First Amendment rights is tyrannical and wrong. My colleagues and I have been taking action to combat this unconstitutional action. First, we have written two letters to the Attorney General expressing our grave concerns and demanding answers. Those two letters can be found [here](#) and [here](#). I have also cosponsored two House resolutions that show support for parents and call for the protection of their First Amendment rights. Text of those resolutions can be found [here](#) and [here](#). I will not sit idly by as Biden's Department of Justice attempts to erode parents' freedom of speech and their right to be involved in the educational needs of their children.

Remain in Mexico Policy:

Since day one President Biden has actively worked to open our southern border, and his efforts have created an immigration crisis of unmatched severity. Now, the Department of Homeland Security is asking officials to be prepared for the possibility of 350,000 to 400,000 more illegal border encounters in October. This would be the largest number of encounters in American history, and already, since February 1, 2021, more than 1.2 million illegal immigrants have been encountered crossing the border.

Among many actions I have taken to combat this crisis, I recently cosponsored H.R. 1259, the *REMAIN in Mexico Act*. This bill requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to implement the Migrant Protection Protocols (MPP), or the Remain in Mexico Program, in accordance with former Secretary Nielsen's January 2019 memorandum. MPP is a program implemented by the Trump Administration that required certain aliens entering or seeking to enter the United States from Mexico to remain outside of the United States for the duration of their immigration proceedings. Therefore, MPP essentially ended "catch and release" by requiring aliens to wait outside of the United States instead of being released into the interior of the country. President Biden has been trying to end MPP since his first day in office. However, on August 13, 2021, Judge Kacsmaryk of the Northern District of Texas ordered DHS to "enforce and implement MPP in good faith[.]" DHS has announced that it will be restarting MPP next month, but given the Biden Administration's track record, Congress cannot rely on them to actually implement the program in good faith, especially because they have already announced that they are planning to attempt once again to terminate MPP if Judge Kacsmaryk's injunction is lifted.



Energy Crisis:

Our Nation is facing avoidable crises on many fronts. As a result of President Biden and the Democrats' failed leadership, Americans are dealing with a border crisis, an inflation crisis, a crime crisis, and a crisis in Afghanistan. And now, with the national average for a gallon of gas

hitting \$3.30 last week, a seven-year high, we are also facing an energy crisis. This is President Biden's fault, and his anti-energy agenda has destroyed American jobs and ended America's energy independence.

On his first day in office, the President killed 11,000 jobs by canceling the Keystone Pipeline and one of his first Executive Orders paused new oil and gas leasing on U.S. lands and waters. That Executive Order alone will cost approximately one million American jobs in the near term and will decrease U.S. Gross Domestic Product by \$700 billion. That same Order also puts America's energy security at risk. To make up for the slowed production in the United States, U.S. oil imports from foreign sources will increase by 2 million barrels a day, and through 2030, we will spend \$500 billion more on energy from foreign suppliers. And unfortunately, instead of making it easier for American companies to increase domestic oil and gas production and hire more U.S. workers, Biden begged OPEC and Russia to increase global output to ease rising prices.

The President has made us more reliant on dangerous adversaries overseas, rather than maintaining policies that made America a net exporter of energy. Joe Biden must reverse course and once again turn to an all-of-the-above American energy solution that ensures we are reliant on no one but ourselves.



Meeting with Constituents:

It is always a pleasure to meet with constituents both in Virginia's Sixth District and here in DC. This week I toured Wurth Revcar Fasteners, Inc in Roanoke as well as met with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the 2021 Virginia Teacher of the Year, Anthony Swann of Vinton, in my office in Washington. To request a meeting, please visit my website, which is listed at the bottom of the page.



Würth Revcar Fasteners, Inc (Roanoke)



Teachers of the Year:

- (L) Antoine Sharpe of Fairfax (DoDEA Teacher of the Year, 2020)
- (C) Anthony Swann of Vinton (Virginia Teacher of the Year, 2021)
- (R) Andrea Johnson of Roanoke (Virginia Teacher of the Year, 2020)

COVID-19 Update:

As of October 24, 2021, Virginia has had 918,700 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 13,745. Further, according to the VDH's COVID-19 vaccine data dashboard, as of October 24th, 5,921,619 people have been vaccinated with at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and 5,324,523 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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