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News From Congressman Ben Cline



CONGRESSMAN  
**BEN CLINE**



## **Sixth District Perspectives** *with Congressman Ben Cline*

As Congress heads into the new year, my colleagues and I are working on several important legislative initiatives. For example, we are fighting to rein in Big Tech censorship by writing to Twitter's new CEO demanding he apply content policies fairly on his platform. Further, one issue that must be addressed when Congress returns to session in January is the border crisis. The situation is only getting worse, and the new statistics recently release by Customs and Border Protection are alarming. In addition, on Wednesday, I was pleased to announce this year's nominations of Sixth District students to the various U.S. Service Academies. All of the students nominated showed a passion for service and are well-qualified for the honor of acceptance. I also enjoyed the opportunity to hear from local members of the National Down Syndrome Society to discuss how Congress can continue to raise awareness about this genetic disorder. While working on behalf of the Sixth District never stops, I am glad to be home with my family celebrating the holidays, and I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas.

### **Big Tech Censorship:**

In recent years, Big Tech has grown increasingly powerful, especially social media companies like Facebook and Twitter. Twitter specifically has been marred by acts of censorship, particularly when it comes to individuals and entities with conservative viewpoints. Such examples include the de-platforming of a sitting U.S. President, suspending the New York Post's official account for reporting on then-Democrat nominee Joe Biden's son's scandals shortly before the election, and censoring many other conservative voices, while not applying the same standards to liberal-progressive content. This has resulted in a debate in Congress

about the need to rein in Big Tech and rethink the social media giants' liability protection under Section 230 of the *Communications Decency Act*. Therefore, with the announcement of Parag Agrawal as Twitter's new CEO, my colleagues and I wrote to him urging him to commit to applying the company's content policies fairly, no matter the political leaning of the speaker on his platform. We can no longer accept the silencing of conservative voices. The full letter can be found [here](#).

### **Border Security:**

Last Friday, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) confirmed that last month was the worst November at the border in the Department of Homeland Security's history. Border officials encountered more than 173,000 illegal immigrants crossing the southwest border in November, more than double the previous record for November, which came in FY 2000 when there were 76,196 apprehensions. Of those 173,000, the statistics become even more concerning when broken down. 13,959 of the illegal aliens encountered were unaccompanied minors, which truly speaks to the humanitarian crisis at the border. Further, CBP confirmed that 60,659 of those who unlawfully crossed the border were not from the Northern Triangle or Mexico – meaning people from all over the world are attempting to cross the southern border because they know it is not secure. This was exemplified by the arrest this week of a potential terrorist at the border who CBP described as a “21-year-old migrant from Saudi Arabia [who] is linked to several Yemeni subjects of interest.” Border security is national security, and this Administration is asleep at the wheel.



### **Service Academy Nominations:**

One of the most important responsibilities I have as the Representative for Virginia's Sixth District is the nomination of high school seniors and others to one of four United States Service Academies. Understanding this, I spent the past several months meeting individually with each interested applicant. The passion for service and love of country that these students exuded was truly inspiring, and I was pleased to announce this week the names of those I nominated to each Academy. I offer these students my sincere congratulations and wish them the best of luck throughout the rest of the admissions process. Nominees are listed below alphabetically.

#### ***United States Naval Academy***

- [Charles Armes](#), senior at Heritage High School and a resident of Lynchburg
- [Darian Belisle](#), freshman at Mary Baldwin University and a resident of Staunton
- [Zachary Hodgen](#), senior at Wilson Memorial High School and a resident of Fishersville
- [Seamus Looney](#), senior at Rockbridge High School and a resident of Lexington
- [Logan Perry](#), senior at Stuarts Draft High School and a resident of Stuarts Draft

- [Weston Rogers](#), freshman at James Madison University and a resident of Harrisonburg
- [Alice Sherman](#), senior at Patrick Henry High School and a resident of Roanoke
- [Patrick Uhlenkott](#), freshman at Franciscan University of Steubenville and a resident of Front Royal
- [Jacob Warner](#), senior at The New Community School and a resident of Rockbridge

### ***United States Military Academy***

- [Kameron Burns](#), senior at Heritage High School and a resident of Lynchburg
- [Lance Dorman](#), senior at Fishburne Military School and a resident New Market
- [Nathan Haskins](#), senior at Skyline High School and a resident of Front Royal
- [Cadless Jarvis](#), senior at Fishburne Military School and a resident of Waynesboro
- [Robert Miller](#), senior at William Byrd High School and a resident of Roanoke
- [Noah Miller](#), senior at Turner Ashby High School and a resident of Bridgewater
- [Kaiden Minter](#), senior at Northside High School and a resident of Roanoke
- [Andrew Sakamoto](#), senior at Hidden Valley High School and a resident of Roanoke
- [Dillon Stowers](#), senior at Liberty Christian Academy and a resident of Lynchburg
- [McKenna Vess](#), senior at Wilson Memorial High School and a resident of Waynesboro

### ***United States Air Force Academy***

- Bradley Colkitt, senior at Jefferson Forest High School and a resident of Lynchburg
- Jarred Newcomb, senior at Jefferson Forest High School and a resident of Forest
- Jakob Presley, freshman at Lord Fairfax Community College and a resident of Maurertown
- [Mariela Ruiz](#), senior at Waynesboro High School and a resident of Waynesboro
- [Francis Treutlein](#), senior at Warren County High School and a resident of Linden

### ***United States Merchant Marine Academy***

- [Connor Wolfe](#), senior at Parry McCluer High School and a resident of Buena Vista



### **Down Syndrome Awareness:**

Down syndrome is the most common chromosomal condition in the United States and is caused by the presence of a third copy of the 21st chromosome (trisomy 21). All people with Down syndrome experience cognitive delays, but the effect is usually mild to moderate and is not indicative of the many strengths and talents that each individual possesses. They attend school and work, participate in decisions that affect them, have meaningful relationships, and contribute to society in many significant ways.

This week, I was pleased to meet with Bill Lawfield and his daughter, Madison, in my Roanoke office. They are members of the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS), which is the leading human rights organization for all individuals with Down syndrome, and the largest nonprofit in the United States dedicated to advocating for individuals with the condition. I appreciated the opportunity to hear from Mr. Lawfield about ways in which Congress can continue to address Down Syndrome and raise awareness about this genetic disorder.



**Merry Christmas:**

This year let us remember the true meaning of Christmas. From my family to yours, I wish you a happy and healthy holiday season. May your days be filled with joy.

*"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." ~Luke 2:11*





### **COVID-19 Update:**

This week in Virginia there was an average of [32.7](#) daily cases of COVID-19 per every 100,000 residents. This is up from an average of [30.0](#) cases from one week prior. This week's positivity rate was 9.9%, up from 8.8% from last week. For more information, click [here](#).



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*

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