

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 29, 2009

The Honorable Hilda Solis
Secretary, U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Madam Secretary:

We are writing to you on behalf of more than 1,200 employees of the International Paper Co. sawmill and paper mill in Franklin, Virginia who have recently lost their jobs or are scheduled to lose them soon.

Earlier this year, a petition was filed with the Department of Labor's Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA) on behalf of International Paper's saw mill workforce. That petition is currently awaiting a certification decision. As you know, federal law requires consideration of such petitions within 40 days of their filing. We would appreciate if you provide us with an update on the status of this petition, and request that you review the petition at your earliest convenience.


With the recent announcement of the complete closure of the paper mill in Southeastern Virginia, an additional petition will be filed shortly on behalf of the 1,100 employees who will lose their job over the coming months. The closing of the mills is a devastating blow to the surrounding community and the Commonwealth of Virginia. During this uncertain time of transition for individuals and families, it is of the utmost importance that the federal government step forward to ensure appropriate services and benefits are timely provided. We will be watching closely to ensure that the adjudication of this particular petition is accomplished in a timely manner, in accordance with the law, and unimpeded by bureaucratic delays.

Please feel free to contact us or Will Hupman from Mr. Forbes' staff at (202) 225-6365 / will.hupman@mail.house.gov or Ilana Brunner from Mr. Scott's staff at (202) 225-8351 / Ilana.Brunner@mail.house.gov should you have any questions. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Truly,



J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress