

Bill to match Foxconn incentives for Kimberly-Clark clears Assembly

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The Assembly approved [56-37](#) a bill aimed at keeping two Kimberly-Clark plants in the Fox Valley.

The bill comes after Kimberly-Clark at the end of last month announced it would close two plants in Neenah and Fox Crossing, affecting more than 600 jobs.

All Dems except for Milwaukee Rep. Jason Fields voted against the bill. GOP Reps. Cody Horlacher, Scott Allen, Adam Jarchow and Todd Novak also opposed it.

The legislation would increase tax credits for job retention to 17 percent to the paper manufacturer's payroll, up from the current 7 percent. Under the bill, Kimberly-Clark would also get refundable tax credits for 15 percent of capital expenditures — up from the standard 10 percent — over a five-year period, as well as a five-year sales tax exemption on those capital expenditures.

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Dems on the floor said the bill represented “another giveaway of taxpayer dollars” on the heels of the Foxconn deal and the federal GOP tax overhaul bill President Trump signed into law in December.

“There’s nothing to prove these tax credits would do anything to keep these jobs here,” said Rep. Amanda Stuck, noting Kimberly-Clark has said it hadn’t asked lawmakers for the incentives but more recently said it would consider the offer, although it was generally noncommittal.

Stuck, D-Appleton, also called on lawmakers to sign off on a Dem amendment would have incorporated a previously unveiled Democratic bill into the GOP legislation that would make a \$60 million state investment in revolving loan funds. But it was

shot down along party lines.

But Rep. Mary Felzkowski countered that paper mills are facing burdensome regulations in the state from the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Natural Resources, therefore reducing supplies and driving up costs. That, she said, stems from Dems in the state moving to over-regulate the state's manufacturers.

"When you have a business climate that is this unfriendly to our manufacturers, they leave," the Irma Republican said.

An Assembly committee on Tuesday signed off on the bill along party lines. It now heads to the Senate.