

# U.S. Rep. Kind: Urges Senate to extend unemployment assistance following Verso Mill closure

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**La Crosse, WI**— Today, **Rep. Ron Kind** sent a letter to Senate leadership urging an extension of federal unemployment assistance to provide a lifeline to Wisconsin workers affected by the Verso Corporation paper mill closure. Hundreds of Verso employees in Wisconsin Rapids have been left facing unemployment as the plant idles, and many jobs were lost right as federal supplementary unemployment benefits expired. With dire economic conditions in central Wisconsin due to the COVID-19 crisis and mill closure, workers and families need additional assistance to weather the pandemic.

“For many Verso employees, the mill was more than a job. It was a part of the community’s identity, and the bedrock of local economies,” said **Rep. Ron Kind**. “Wisconsin Rapids workers and families are already facing so much uncertainty, and the last thing they should have to worry about is whether or not they will be able to receive these benefits. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, it’s critical that we extend unemployment assistance to help keep workers, families, and communities afloat during these difficult times.”

Since Verso Corporations announced plans to idle the Wisconsin Rapids paper mill, Rep. Kind has worked with state, local, and federal officials, industry and labor representatives, and Verso employees to develop a plan for the future of the mill and to provide support for the employees and their families. Rep. Kind has taken steps to provide additional job training services for those looking for new employment opportunities and has worked with the Evers Administration to try to

find a new buyer for the mill.

In May, Rep. Kind voted for the *HEROES Act*, which would extend the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) through January 2021. The Senate failed to act and the FPUC expired on July 25<sup>th</sup>, right when Verso workers were in need of assistance.

You can read Rep. Kind's letter [here](#).

For help, Wisconsinites can contact Rep. Kind and his staff by calling toll-free: 1-888-442-8040 or by visiting [kind.house.gov](http://kind.house.gov).