

Gov. Evers: Pledges state support for Wisconsin paper, forest production industry's federal grant application

Posted on Wednesday, Feb 2, 2022

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

State would provide up to \$8.2 million in matching funds to secure \$100 million federal grant

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced the state of Wisconsin will provide up to \$8.2 million in matching funds in support of a federal grant application that would help ensure the long-term viability of the state's paper and forest products industry.

[In a letter to U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo](#), Gov. Evers and Secretary and CEO of the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Missy Hughes expressed support for the application of a coalition of paper and forest product industry stakeholders for a \$100 million Build Back Better Challenge Grant from the federal government.

"The paper and forest products industry is vital to our entire state's economic well-being, particularly in our rural and tribal communities," Gov. Evers and Secretary Hughes wrote. "The Build Back Better Challenge Grant offers an unparalleled opportunity to ensure the viability of this key industry for generations to come."

Late last year, Wisconsin's proposal was one of 60 nationwide to receive a \$500,000 planning grant in the first round of Build Back Better Challenge Grant awards. To qualify for the next round of \$100 million grants, applicants must demonstrate they can provide at least \$20 million in matching funds for the project.

The coalition, led by the Wisconsin Paper Council and including the Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, Mid-State Technical College, Menominee Tribal Enterprises, UW-Stevens Point, the Department of Natural Resources and Sustainable Resource Solutions, Inc., has indicated it has already secured \$11.8 million in funds from businesses, tribal and local governments, individuals, and nonprofits.

In the letter, Gov. Evers and Secretary Hughes noted that the forest and paper products industry plays a vital and unique part in Wisconsin's economic, environmental, and social well-being.

Wisconsin's paper and forest products industry is the largest in the nation, providing high-quality jobs to nearly 63,000 workers statewide. The industry contributes nearly \$18 billion to the state's manufacturing output and drives more than \$1 billion in exports to 100 countries.