



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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For Immediate Release
June 10, 2020

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Reps. Stuck & Gruszynski Statement on Closure of Verso Paper Mill ***Verso Corporation Announces Indefinite Shuttering of Plant in Wisconsin Rapids – Most of the 915 Jobs to Be Eliminated***

MADISON – Rep. Amanda Stuck and Rep. Staush Gruszynski issued the following statement following yesterday’s announcement by Verso of the indefinite shuttering of their Wisconsin Rapids Paper Mill.

“My heart goes out to the employees, the families, and the entire community of Wisconsin Rapids who in these already difficult times, life just got even harder, stated Rep. Stuck. “We have seen in the Fox Valley what happens when a bedrock institution, like a paper mill shuts down, it has a negative ripple effect on the entire community from non-profits, to suppliers, to the small businesses where employees shop.”

“While I am disappointed that Verso this decision, I am even more disappointed that the State of Wisconsin has done nothing to help the paper industry as a whole,” said Rep. Stuck. “Even with the eventual formation of the Wisconsin Paper Caucus, led by Rep. Scott Krug and former Sen. Tom Tiffany, no legislation was put forward by the Republican members of the caucus.”

“While no one solution or one bill will be a magic bullet, Assembly Bill 199, the Papermaker Fund Bill is a step in the right direction. I have proudly introduced this legislation during the last two sessions, but it has yet to receive a hearing,” stated Rep. Stuck. The bill creates a revolving loan fund to help mills transition to in-demand brown paper products and a revolving loan fund to help with energy efficiency and alternative energy projects.”

“I am disappointed and saddened by the lack of response to take action to ensure a long-term solution to securing the future of the paper industry in Wisconsin,” said Rep. Gruszynski. “Assembly Bill 199 has been sitting in committee since May 2019 and although the bill is not a fix-all it certainly would help ease the financial burden on paper mills in Wisconsin, helping to save countless jobs of hard-working Wisconsinites.”

“In Green Bay, we’ve taken steps to invest in one of our mills to make it a leader in sustainability and a continued economic driver in Northeastern Wisconsin,” stated Rep. Gruszynski. “Without legislation like AB 199, we will continue to see a major Wisconsin industry continue to struggle.”

“In just the last four years we have seen mill closures, job losses, bankruptcies, and restructuring of paper mills across the State of Wisconsin, but have not seen any meaningful, industry-focused plan from the state keep these mills, jobs, and companies in Wisconsin,” said Rep. Stuck. “I will continue to push for long-term solutions to help keep mills open today, tomorrow, and for many years into the future.”

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