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**J. Randy Forbes**  
**United States Congress**

**4th District, Virginia**

**November 2, 2009**

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Dallas Tonsager  
Undersecretary for Rural Development  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Stop 0107, Room 205-W  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Tonsager:

I am writing on behalf of more than 1,100 employees of the International Paper Co. sawmill and paper mill in Southeastern Virginia who have recently lost their jobs or are scheduled to lose them in the near future.

The closure 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 steps forward to ensure appropriate services and benefits are timely provided. To that end, I would like to request that you or an appropriate representative join me in the coming weeks in the City of Franklin, Isle of Wight, and Southampton counties for an economic development forum on the specific ways Rural Development can support the community during this challenging time of transition.

As they have done for years in the past, these communities will pull together to renew their economy. The families you will meet here are proud, hard-working people. I am confident that Rural Development's guidance and resources in cooperation with the efforts of federal, state, and local leaders will help the City of Franklin, Isle of Wight, and Southampton counties towards a brighter future.

I would appreciate if you would contact me or Ryan Kaldahl from my staff at (202) 225-6365 / [ryan.kaldahl@mail.house.gov](mailto:ryan.kaldahl@mail.house.gov) at your earliest convenience regarding this request. Thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you. With kind personal regards, I am

Yours Truly,

J. Randy Forbes  
Member of Congress