Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

October 28, 2009

Mr. John Faraci
Chairman and CEO
International Paper
6400 Poplar Avenue
Memphis, TN 38197

Dear Mr. Faraci:

The October 22nd announcement of the closing of International Paper's Franklin Mill has been met with shock, dismay and many questions regarding the future of more than1,000 full-time employees, as well as the physical plant itself. We realize that the challenges of today's global marketplace are formidable, but the mill's closing will cause significant economic hardship across a broad region of eastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina.

The impact of eliminating these jobs spreads well beyond the City of Franklin, Southampton, and Isle of Wight counties. The impact reaches into Hampton Roads, Virginia, and into northern and eastern North Carolina. Other companies, suppliers, and retail businesses will be severely affected. In addition, your company and these employees provide vital tax revenues, support and community stability to local and state governments throughout the impacted area.

According to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, IP's elimination of this manufacturing facility will result in a loss of an additional 2,400 other jobs in sectors such as logging, automotive repair, trucking, real estate and medical services.

For generations, fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters have worked in the mills and produced quality paper products in an efficient, cost-effective manner. This plant has been recognized as the third most efficient in the International Paper family, and it unquestionably has been a top producer with skilled and dedicated employees.

We are deeply concerned about the news of the closing and ask that you and other representatives of International Paper meet with us and other community leaders to discuss and provide answers to the following:

a. Why is the plant closing and what other options were considered?

b. If the plant is to be closed, can the closing date be extended so that there is additional time for workforce transition and community planning for new economic development strategies? It would be helpful if the closing could be postponed for another year.

c. What will happen to the plant? Will the equipment remain or will the plant be dismantled? Why will the customer service employees be relocated elsewhere when they could remain at Franklin? Whatever happens to the land and assets is vital to know before future economic development planning can take place. We assume that opportunities will be afforded to pursue non-competing businesses at this mill site as you have permitted at other IP owned mill closures.

We believe that a closing of this magnitude and with a community impact this deep necessitates your strong commitment to work with the affected local governments, state governments, and our offices to bring about the best possible results. Please call Senator Warner's Chief of Staff, Luke Albee, at [redacted] so that we may schedule a meeting as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

JIM WEBB
United States Senator

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress

J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress

KAY HAGAN
United States Senator

cc: Timothy Kaine, Governor of Virginia
International Paper Board of Directors