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Joint Statement by Mayors of Wisconsin Rapids and Park Falls on Legislature's passage of "Mill Bill"

WISCONSIN RAPIDS/PARK FALLS – The Wisconsin Legislature passed the "Mill Bill" on June 29, 2021, which would provide a \$50 million loan to a buyer for the Wisconsin Rapids paper mill and \$15 million loan to a buyer for the Park Falls paper mill. Both of these mills are currently idle, ravaged by the economic fallout over the last year. The impacts on both communities have been severe, with thousands of manufacturing jobs lost, thousands of logging jobs severely impacted, and leaving two enormous facilities idle in the middle of both communities.

We are calling on the Governor to sign the legislation as quickly as possible, to ensure that confidence is restored to both communities and the affected workers and loggers. We understand that there have been legitimate concerns raised on both sides, as it relates to the details of this bill. However, the urgency of this bill necessitates an urgent response – the Governor should sign the bill that the Wisconsin Legislature has passed.

"Time is of the essence, the workers cannot wait any longer," said Mayor Michael Bablick, Park Falls, "if the Governor signs this bill, I believe it is possible to see the mill at partial production by mid-late August and major capital improvements starting earlier than that."

"The idling of our city's paper mill has already had a profound financial and social impact on our community, our region and our state. This bill poses an opportunity to inspire hope in our community while bringing back family-sustaining jobs and ensuring our paper professionals' expertise stays local. Now is the time to act on this bill," said Mayor Shane Blaser, Wisconsin Rapids.

The Rapids Together Task Force now has a webpage set up for Wisconsin residents to quickly express your support of the bill. If you support the bill, please sign the form, hit "submit" and share the link with your networks. Sign the letter of support here: legis.wisconsin.gov/rapidstogether/contact-the-governor/

Learn more about the Rapids Together Task Force here: legis.wisconsin.gov/rapidstogether

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