

No. R-324. House concurrent resolution congratulating RockTenn of Sheldon Springs on its receipt of the 2009 Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation's business award.

(H.C.R.210)

Offered by: Representatives Savage of Swanton, Branagan of Georgia, Consejo of Sheldon, Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Gilbert of Fairfax, Higley of Lowell, Howrigan of Fairfield, Keenan of St. Albans City, McAllister of Highgate, Pearce of Richford, Perley of Enosburg and Young of St. Albans City

Whereas, the RockTenn paper mill (the Mill) has a proud history as one of Franklin County's oldest and most successful manufacturers, and

Whereas, the 116-year history of the Mill began in 1894 when Joseph T. Shepley moved from Newport to Sheldon Springs, and

Whereas, he immediately arranged for the construction of the original segment of the plant, which opened in 1895, and the plant, known for many years as the Missisquoi Pulp and Paper Mill, became a major area employer, and

Whereas, Sheldon Springs was known as a company town because the mill constructed most of the community's general and residential buildings including the store, several other widely used structures, and most of the housing, and

Whereas, water was the Mill's original power source, and over the decades, its self-generated electricity has relied on different fuels as efforts continue to explore energy efficiency options including cogeneration and tri-generation, and

Whereas, during the Mill's operation as Standard Packing, a VEDA-financed pollution abatement system was installed consisting of a filtering plant and lagoon to treat the wastewater, and

Whereas, RockTenn has operated the Mill since 1991, and it has proven to be an ideal owner committed to maximizing the Mill's output, providing employment to over 150 Franklin County residents, maintaining a payroll in excess of \$10 million annually with excellent benefits, and even slightly increasing its number of employees despite the economic downturn, and

Whereas, production levels in 2009 exceeded 100,000 tons of recycled paperboard, which is now the Mill's primary product, and

Whereas, RockTenn's employees advance their knowledge and skills through enrollment in adult education programs offered at Northwest Technical Center and by the local Workforce Improvement Board, and

Whereas, ever since the establishment of the governor's council on physical fitness and wellness, it has annually awarded worksite recognition to RockTenn for the Mill's excellent employee health activities, and

Whereas, the Mill's employees are consistent and enthusiastic supporters of the annual Franklin County United Way campaigns, and

Whereas, when a major fire struck the Mill last summer, RockTenn exhibited a true commitment to the business, reopening the plant in less than a week, and

Whereas, all of these commendable operational and managerial factors easily persuaded the Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation to honor RockTenn with its 2009 business award, which was richly deserved, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates RockTenn of Sheldon Springs on its receipt of the 2009 Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation's business award, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to RockTenn General Manager Chris Ham-Ellis in Sheldon Springs.