

# **SENATOR JOHN EDWARDS CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC RELIEF FOR NORTH CAROLINA WORKERS**

Upon hearing today's news that nearly 5,000 Pillowtex workers are losing their jobs, Senator Edwards took immediate action to help the laid-off workers, assist their struggling communities, and protect existing North Carolina jobs and create new ones.

## **OFFERING AN IMMEDIATE HELPING HAND FOR WORKERS:**

- Called on the U.S. Department of Labor to approve quickly two emergency grants totaling \$38 million. The state of North Carolina applied for a \$19.5 million grant on June 23rd and, in immediate response to the Pillowtex crisis, is now applying for a second \$18.5 million grant. In a letter today, July 30th, Edwards urged the Labor Department to speed the process to help North Carolina communities as quickly as possible.
- Urged the Labor Department to quickly certify workers' eligibility for Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) in the same letter. TAA offers job training and extended unemployed assistance to workers dislocated by trade. It can normally take months for the Labor Department to establish eligibility. Edwards is also reintroducing legislation—first proposed last year—to cut red tape so that, in the future, displaced textile workers will get TAA while their applications are processed.
- Asked the U.S. Department of Education to help North Carolina's dislocated workers get student aid, including Pell Grants, to continue their educations in a second letter sent today. Specifically, Edwards asked Education to clarify that community colleges and other educators do not have to rely on the standard eligibility formula when calculating student aid for dislocated workers.
- Introduced legislation to give community colleges the resources they need to expand their training programs for dislocated workers.

## **ASSISTING STRUGGLING COMMUNITIES:**

- Announced that today he is establishing a task force of federal, state, and local officials to coordinate the federal government's response to this economic disaster.
- Called on the U.S. Department of Commerce in letter today to outline the steps it can take to create jobs in North Carolina and to meet with North Carolina officials and Pillowtex workers.

## **PROTECTING TODAY'S JOBS AND CREATING NEW ONES:**

- Proposed legislation to designate hard-hit communities as Economic Revitalization Zones. These zones would receive federal tax incentives to spur development and create jobs.
- Renewed his call for the Bush Administration to implement safeguards to protect American textile workers from surging imports from China in a letter today to the Commerce Department.
- Warned Treasury Secretary John Snow in a letter today that the Administration is risking U.S. jobs by supporting new tax breaks for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. multinational corporations.