

State Representative

JAMES EDMING

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SPRING 2022



“Representing the people of the 87th Assembly District is the best job I have ever had. It is an honor to be your voice in Madison.”

– Rep. Edming

CONTACT ME

Please sign up for my E-Updates on my website!

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Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As the 2021-2022 legislative session comes to a close, I would like to thank you, the hardworking people of the 87th Assembly District, for the trust you continue to place in me to be your voice at the State Capitol. As I often tell folks, being your state representative is the best job I've ever had.

With divided government in Madison, it can be difficult to get things accomplished. However, even with this challenge, there are still a number of good things that the Legislature was able to get done for the people of Wisconsin. I am proud that of ten bills I authored this session, all but one received bipartisan support in the Legislature. Here are just some of the priorities that we successfully delivered this session:

- Rejected Governor Evers's state budget proposal with over \$1 billion in tax increases and replaced it with one that delivered a historic tax cut of over \$3 billion.
- Built on last session's record amount of K-12 education funding increasing it to over \$13 billion, the most in state history.
- Invested over \$130 million in state highway rehabilitation and \$100 million in the Local Road Improvement Program.
- Provide \$6 million annually for youth apprenticeships and \$83 million to help people with disabilities access the workforce.

Thank you again for allowing me to serve you. If you have any thoughts on this past session or any ideas for next session, feel free to share them with me. Some of the best bill ideas come from constituents just like you.

Sincerely,

James W. Edming
State Representative
87th Assembly District



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JAMES EDMING



Helping Our Veterans & Service Members

This session, one of my top priorities has been helping our veterans and active duty service members. Those who serve in the military, and their families, make great sacrifices for our state and nation. It's an honor to advocate for them in the Legislature.

During the budget process, I was proud to join with Senator Jacque to lead the effort to increase funding for county veteran service offices (CVSOs). Because of this effort, the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) doubled the governor's proposed increase for CVSOs. The JFC also incorporated into the budget legislation

I authored to eliminate the state income tax on active duty military pay.

Later in the session, I joined with Senator Kooyenga to bring forward legislation to help keep the cost of attending college down for



I am proud to have lead the effort this session on several proposals to help our veterans and active duty service members.

service members and their families. **Senate Bill (SB) 605** allows relocated service members and their families to be considered residents of Wisconsin for the purposes of paying in-state tuition at a public university or technical college. I'm pleased to share that **SB 605** was signed into law on March 8th as **Act 159**.

Lastly, I have continued the effort to expand the eligibility for the disabled veteran and surviving spouse property tax credit. Currently, a veteran must have a service-connected disability rating of 100% in order to qualify for the tax credit. I brought forward legislation lowering that threshold to 70%. While this proposal did make it out of the Assembly committee, unfortunately, it did not receive approval by the full Legislature before the session ended.

During my time in the Legislature, I've learned that great ideas can take more than one session to get across the finish line. While I am disappointed that we didn't get this bill done, I plan to continue fighting on this issue and hope to get it to the governor's desk next session.

A New Tool to Protect Local Roads

As part of the last two state budgets the Legislature has made some significant investments in local road funding. This session, the Legislature provided \$100 million in funding targeted at local road repairs through the Local Roads Improvement Program.

In addition to investing more in our roads, it's also important to give local governments tools to help keep roads in good shape. A while back, local officials in Rusk County contacted me to share the problems they were having with beavers damaging local roads. While the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does use measures such as trapping to prevent this, they are not always effective.

Another tool that can be effective is shooting the animal that is causing the damage. However, discharging a firearm within 50 feet of the center of the road is normally prohibited under state law. To solve this problem, I introduced **Assembly Bill 163** which would give the DNR, or an agent of a local government authorized by the DNR, the authority to discharge a firearm within the 50-foot buffer to shoot a beaver or muskrat that is damaging a roadway.

I'm pleased to share that this idea from the 87th was approved by both houses of the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Evers as **Act 62** this past July. During my time in the Legislature, I've found that some of the best ideas come from the people I represent, and this law is no different.



Thank you to Town of Atlanta Chairman Steve Tieg for coming down to Madison to support AB 163!

Cleaning Up the Community

Another bill I was proud to author this session is **Assembly Bill (AB) 943** which I brought forward with Senator Petrowski. This bill provides up to \$2.5 million in funding for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to contract for the removal of the hazardous electronic waste left behind by the now-defunct company 5R Processors. This waste is currently contained in several locations in Rusk, Price, and Washington Counties.

Investigations of 5R by the DNR and the federal government discovered illegal activity on the part of the company, including the storing of hazardous waste at unpermitted facilities, transporting hazardous waste without the required manifest, and concealing these violations from state regulators.

While we would all like to see those who are responsible for this hazardous waste pay for the cost of the cleanup, they are likely to never have the money to do so. Unless the state steps in, the cost of this cleanup could fall to local governments, and local taxpayers which they cannot afford.

At the time I am writing this update, **AB 943** has cleared both houses of the Legislature. Hopefully, it will be signed into law by the time this newsletter hits your mailbox.



Thank you to everyone from Rusk, Price, and Washington Counties who traveled to Madison to testify in support of AB 943.

Cutting Red Tape for Summer Camps



I was pleased to present Andy Shlensky and Dr. Bill Lisberg from North Star Camp for Boys in Hayward with a copy of Act 44. Andy came to me with the idea for this reform a few years ago, and it's great to see it now law.

and the rest made it across the finish line last spring, including the bill I authored, **Senate Bill (SB) 168**. This new law makes it easier for out-of-state physicians to serve as camp doctors here in Wisconsin. **SB 168** was signed as **Act 44** and is already making a difference for camps in our state.

With Wisconsin's many lakes and forests, we have some of the best outdoor recreational opportunities in the world, making our state a perfect place to spend some time at camp. Our camps attract campers from around the world and are an important part of the economy.

Over the past couple of sessions, I've worked with some of my colleagues to cut some unnecessary government red tape for camps in our state by bringing forward the Summer Camp Regulatory Reform Package. A couple of bills became law last session,

— EVERS — VETO HIT-LIST

- PRO-LIFE BILLS **VETOED**
- PRO-POLICE BILLS **VETOED**
- SAFER AND TRANSPARENT VOTING PRACTICES **VETOED**
- HELPING 'AT-RISK' STUDENTS WITH A PERSONALIZED READING PLAN **VETOED**
- SAVING TWO LONG-STANDING PAPER MILLS **VETOED**



State Representative

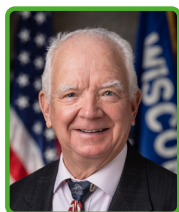
JAMES EDMING

Proudly representing the 87th Assembly District which includes communities in Clark, Marathon, Rusk, Sawyer, and Taylor Counties.



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– Rep. Edming



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Last spring I was pleased to join with Senator Petrowski to present a legislative citation to Dawn Swenson on the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of dedicated service as the clerk for the Village of Rib Lake.

Honoring Two American Heroes



In February, Rusk County World War II veterans Elmer Wisherd and Clarence Stine were honored by the Assembly as Hometown Heroes. With over 100 years under their belts, they are the definition of true American heroes, both in their defense of our country during World War II, and their service to the community in the years since. I've known them for many years, and it was an honor to introduce them to my colleagues and present them with the awards.



I had an awesome time getting a behind-the-scenes look at the Lumberjack World Championships in Hayward this past July. I am incredibly proud to have this world-class event in the 87th District.



Chris Headley of Hayward was recognized as the 87th Assembly District's First Responder of the Year at Hayward City Hall in December.