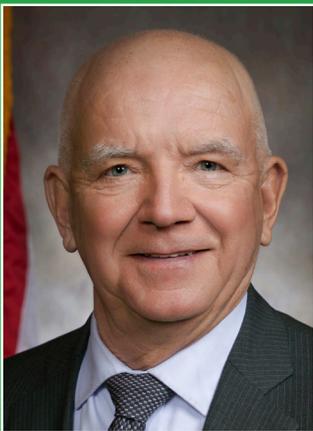




State Representative
JAMES W. EDMING

Proudly Representing Communities in Clark, Marathon, Rusk, Sawyer and Taylor Counties



JAMES W. EDMING
STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is an honor and privilege to serve the people of the 87th Assembly District in the Wisconsin State Assembly. As I often tell folks, being your state representative is the best job I have ever had. Thank you for allowing me to be your voice in Madison. As this session draws to a close, I wanted to share with you just a few of the many things we have accomplished this session.

- Passed a budget that increases state aid to school districts by \$636 million
- Passed a budget which increases support for broadband expansion grants
- Passed laws to fight heroin and opiate addiction
- Passed laws to reform foster care in Wisconsin, providing foster children and parents the support they need

As always, I value your input as it helps me form my decisions on issues in the legislature. I encourage you to continue to communicate with me and my office. If you have any thoughts on state issues or ideas for what we should pursue next session, feel free to share them with me. Many of the best bill ideas come from constituents just like you.

Sincerely,

James W. Edming
State Representative
87th Assembly District

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“Being your state representative is the best job I have ever had. It is an honor to be your voice in the State Assembly.”

- James W. Edming



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PROMOTING COMMUNITY BASED EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

A couple of years ago, I participated in a community discussion in Medford focused on employing people with disabilities. At this event, I learned about the Employment First movement which is the promotion of competitive integrated employment (CIE). CIE is the employment of individuals with disabilities in a workplace in the community working alongside people without a disability. I was pleased to learn that the Medford area is a leader in promoting Employment First policies, however, I also learned that barriers still exist for some disabled individuals who wish to work in the community.

Since that day, I have worked with various stakeholders and state agencies to draft legislation that promotes Employment First policies, while also preserving choice of allowable services. The result of this work is Assembly Bill 625/Senate Bill 514, the Employment First Bill.

Several state agencies are responsible for funding services to help youth and adults with disabilities find employment. However, there are times when these services are fragmented or duplicated. The Employment First Bill requires the state agencies who provide these services to collaborate and develop a joint plan to assist people with disabilities in finding employment in the community. This collaboration will make these services more effective for the people who need them and make it easier for these people to get the support they need to find and keep a job.

With enactment of this legislation, Wisconsin will be a model for the nation in promoting Employment First policies. I am proud to author this bi-partisan legislation with Rep. Anderson (D-Fitchburg) and Sen. Tiffany (R-Hazelhurst) and I hope that by the time this newsletter reaches your mailbox, this bill will have been enacted into law.

PROMOTING YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS

Over the past few years, Wisconsin's business climate has improved significantly, but one area where we continue to struggle is in the area of small business startups. For the economic health of our state to remain strong, it is important that we find new ways to attract and retain young entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, all too often, young entrepreneurs who graduate from our state's colleges and universities leave the state after graduation for better opportunities.

That is why I introduced Assembly Bill 498/Senate Bill 404, which seeks to change that by removing a barrier to entrepreneurship and incentivizing student entrepreneurs to start a business right here in Wisconsin. This bill exempts students, who are at least 18 years of age and enrolled in a post-secondary institution in Wisconsin, from paying the initial \$130 filing fee for creating a limited liability company (LLC).

This exemption would remove one of the hurdles to starting a business for young entrepreneurs, and would also free up more resources for them to get their small businesses off the ground. This legislation makes starting a small business in Wisconsin more desirable and achievable for the next generation of entrepreneurs. This proposal has cleared the legislature and I hope to see it signed into law soon.



For the bill's public hearing back in January, a large group from the Medford area came to Madison to testify in support of the bill. The students who spoke did such a great job that they received a standing ovation!



Rep. Edming testifies in support of AB 498/SB 404.



Rep. Edming with some young constituents at the opening of Huey's Hideaway Children Museum in Medford.

STANDING UP FOR RURAL WISCONSIN

As your representative, I am a proud advocate for rural Wisconsin. At times in Madison, this can be a lonely job, but it is a job that has to be done. I often hear that the voice of rural Wisconsin is not being heard in Madison. That is why I joined with several of my colleagues to form the Rural Wisconsin Initiative (RWI). The RWI is a group of rural legislators committed to making the voice of rural Wisconsin heard in Madison. The focus of the RWI is to bring forward policy solutions to improve access to education, health care, technology, and workforce development in rural Wisconsin.

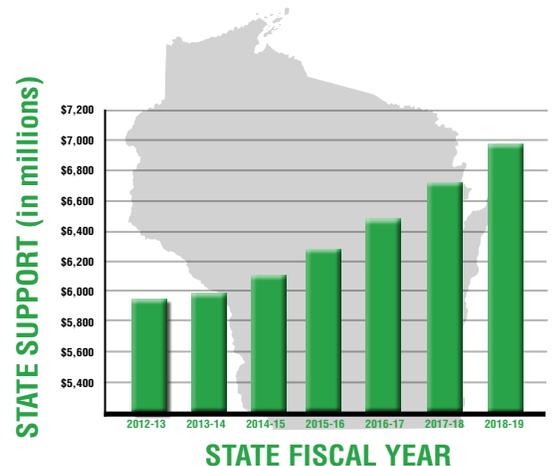
This session, two RWI health care proposals were adopted as part of the state budget. These proposals increase funding for Advanced Practice Clinicians and Allied Health Professionals, two areas that have shortages in our state. These budget provisions create new grant programs to help train these health professionals which will help to fill vacancies in these fields in rural Wisconsin.

Another major accomplishment for rural Wisconsin in the state budget is the increased funding for the Broadband Expansion Grant Program. These grants allow un-served or under-served areas to apply for funding to expand or improve their internet services. I am happy to say that the budget I supported included an additional \$14 million for this important program.

I continue to work with my colleagues to find new ways to provide reliable broadband internet service such as TV White Space Technology. This new technology involves the transmission of internet signals over TV white space (unused space between TV stations). For this idea to become a reality, the Federal Communications Commission would need to adopt regulations to allow this technology to be used. I joined with several of my colleagues to bring forward a Joint Resolution in support of TV White Space Technology.



RECORD FUNDING FOR K-12 EDUCATION



MORE THAN
90%

OF NEW LAWS HAD BIPARTISAN VOTES IN ASSEMBLY



WORKING ACROSS THE AISLE

It may not always seem like it, but many of the bills that pass the legislature and become law receive bipartisan support. In fact, according to the Legislative Reference Bureau more than 90% of new laws enacted this session received bipartisan support. I'm also pleased to share that every piece of legislation that I introduced this session received bipartisan support. I'm proud to author policy solutions that are good for the people of Wisconsin and that earn the support of folks across the political spectrum.



Rep. Edming speaks to cadets from the Wisconsin Challenge Academy.

“As your representative, I am a proud advocate for rural Wisconsin. At times in Madison, this can be a lonely job but it is a job that has to be done.”
- James W. Edming



State Representative JAMES W. EDMING



Rusk County Sheriff's Deputy Matthew Wojcik was honored as a Wisconsin State Assembly Hometown Hero in January.

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“I value your feedback. Understanding my constituents' views helps me to form my decisions on issues before the legislature.” - James W. Edming



Rep. Edming gets feedback from constituents at one of his budget listening sessions.

