



JAMES W. EDMING

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Seeking New Ways to Bring Broadband to Rural Wisconsin

TV White Space: Bringing Reliable Broadband to the Northwoods

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As a lifelong resident of northern Wisconsin, I couldn't imagine a better place to call home. I am honored to serve the folks of the 87th Assembly District in Madison. During my nearly three years as your state representative, I have had the opportunity to meet some amazing, hard-working people and travel all over our beautiful district. We are blessed in the Northwoods with beautiful forests, lakes, and rivers that are treasured around the state. Unfortunately, living in rural Wisconsin is not without its challenges. Many of the families and small businesses in our area do not have access to reliable broadband internet, and this problem continues to hold our communities back.

I regularly hear from folks all over the district, asking when broadband will finally reach their homes. My office and I attempt to assist them the best we can, including speaking with providers in the area. This process is often very frustrating for them and for me. That's why we have created broadband expansion grants that prioritize underserved and unconnected areas. The current budget provides \$14 million in state funding for these grants. But we need to do more to provide these important connections to businesses and homes. That is why, when I heard about TV White Space technology and began looking into it, I realized that this could be the answer we have been looking for to our broadband access problems.

This technology would use the TV White Space, which is the unused spaces between TV stations, to deliver high-speed internet that is four times faster and reaches sixteen times farther than Wi-Fi. It would also not be held back by the trees and landscape of the Northwoods like Wi-Fi is, because the frequency it would use moves through these obstacles. The current estimate is that TV White Space can connect **80%** of the rural population not currently receiving any broadband access. And if that was not promising enough, this technology has been tested successfully in 20 pilot efforts, where it connected 185,000 individuals.

To see this put into use in the Northwoods, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) will need to adopt regulations allowing its usage. I have written a letter to the FCC about the strong need for this technology in our district, and it is my hope to see it be put into use in the Northwoods, where I believe it has the ability to truly transform the lives of my constituents and provide the tools and access that they deserve to succeed.

With this new type of broadband expansion, I believe more people will visit and consider living in one of the most beautiful areas of the state. I'm so proud to call the Northwoods home and hope more families will consider building their American Dream in our area.



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Click [here](#) for a link to the letter to the FCC.