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# JAMES W. EDMING

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 87<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

For Immediate Release  
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## **Rep. Edming Calls for Second Judge in Sawyer County**

*Asks Joint Finance Committee to Include Creation of a New Circuit Court Branch in State Budget*

**MADISON** – Today, Representative James Edming (R-Glen Flora) submitted a motion to legislature’s Joint Finance Committee to amend the state budget to create a second circuit court branch in Sawyer County. According to the most recent case study from the Director of State Courts’ office, Sawyer County Judge John Yackel has the highest caseload of any judicial officer in the state.

“The drug epidemic that is ravaging our state has hit Sawyer County incredibly hard,” said Rep. Edming. “The increasing number of felony filings in the county have reached the point where it is impossible for one judge to handle them all. Judge Yackel is doing a tremendous job trying to keep up with the growing caseload, but it is clear that a second judge is needed.”

In 2016, there were 290 felony complaints filed in Sawyer County. In 2018, the number of felony filings rose to 402. In comparison, nearby Barron County had 452 felony filings in 2018 that were split between that county’s 3 judges.

“With Sawyer County’s ever-increasing caseload, there is simply not time for one judge to develop diversion programs and other treatment methods to help curb the drug epidemic that is gripping the county,” said Rep. Edming. “Awarding Sawyer County a second judge will provide the breathing room needed to allow options like treatment courts to be explored. It is my hope that Sawyer County is given the second circuit court branch that it desperately needs to best meet the needs of the people of Sawyer County.”

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*The 87th Assembly District includes portions of Clark, Marathon, Rusk, Sawyer and Taylor Counties.*