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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

State Auditor Otto Releases Lobbying Report

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ST. PAUL (6/25/2012) – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the 2011 Local Government Lobbying Services Report. It is a comprehensive report which shows the expenditures by local governments and their associations for lobbyists and lobbying for calendar year 2011. The report is intended to inform the public and policymakers on the amount spent by local governments on lobbying services.

The operation and funding of local governments can be greatly affected by decisions made by the state legislature. Therefore, it is understandable that those affected by these decisions would want to have representation during the legislative process. In 2011, the legislative session was in a budget year. Historically, lobbying costs are higher during budget sessions, which are longer in duration. It is notable that in 2011 local government lobbying costs remained relatively flat compared to the prior shorter bonding session in 2010. It should also be noted that there was a government shutdown in 2011.

Highlights from the report include:

- Local governments spent a total of \$8,302,810 on lobbying activities in 2011. This represents an increase of \$54,817, or 0.7 percent, over the amount spent on lobbying services in 2010.
- Eighty-two local governments (5 more than in 2010) reported that they directly employed staff or hired contract lobbyists in 2011. These local governments spent a total of \$3,995,958 on staff and contract lobbyists. This was \$59,692, or 1.5 percent, more than in 2010.
- In addition to the approximately \$4.0 million paid directly to staff and contract lobbyists, local governments paid dues of \$10,305,732 in 2011 to local government associations that also represented their interests before legislative, administrative, or other governmental bodies. These associations spent \$4,306,852 on lobbyists and lobbying in 2011. This represents a decrease of 0.1 percent from 2010. Of the \$4.3 million spent on lobbyists and lobbying by these associations, \$3,922,830 was funded exclusively through dues. This represents a decrease of 1.8 percent from the \$3,995,169 in association dues that were spent on lobbying activities in 2010.

To view the complete report, which includes tables and graphs, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20120622.000>.

The Office of the State Auditor is a constitutional office that is charged with overseeing more than \$20 billion spent annually by local governments in Minnesota. The Office of the State Auditor does this by performing audits of local government financial statements, and by reviewing documents, data, reports, and complaints reported to the Office. The financial information collected from local governments is analyzed and is the basis of statutory reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor.

Rebecca Otto is Minnesota's 18th State Auditor. A high-resolution official photo is available for download at http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto_hires.jpg. To learn more about State Auditor Otto, see <http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=bio>.