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

State Auditor Otto Releases Criminal Forfeitures Report

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ST. PAUL (8/6/2009) – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the Criminal Forfeitures Report, which provides information on the amount of cash and property seized subject to forfeiture by Minnesota law enforcement agencies in 2008. The report lists and summarizes these forfeiture incidents to help provide transparency to the forfeiture process, and to keep policymakers and the public informed on the nature and frequency of property seized subject to forfeiture.

Highlights from the report include:

- In 2008, 225 Minnesota law enforcement agencies (8 more agencies than in 2007) reported a total of 3,823 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture. While 8 more law enforcement agencies reported forfeiture incidents in 2008, the total number of incidents decreased by 1,108 forfeiture incidents, or 22.5 percent from the number reported in 2007.
- Gross sales of forfeited property or seized cash totaled \$3,823,463 in 2008, down 21.4 percent from the \$4,866,485 reported in 2007. Administrative expenses and lien holder's obligations decreased 35.0 percent between 2007 and 2008, dropping from \$547,835 in 2007 to \$356,362 in 2008. Net proceeds totaled \$3,500,434 in 2008, which was 18.9 percent less than the \$4,318,651 reported in 2007.
- Cash accounted for 55 percent (51 percent in 2007) of property seized, followed by vehicles at 26 percent (21 percent in 2007), firearms at 18 percent (26 percent in 2007), and other property at 1 percent (2 percent in 2007).
- Of the 3,823 forfeiture incidents reported, 3,262 involved seized cash, property that was sold, or an agreement that required monetary compensation to the agency. Net proceeds derived from forfeitures ranged from \$0 to \$108,620. Net proceeds per forfeiture incident averaged \$1,073 in 2008, compared to \$1,237 in 2007.

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- The agencies with the most forfeiture incidents in 2008 were: the Minneapolis Police Department (406), the Minnesota State Patrol (337), the Southeast Minnesota Drug Task Force (224), the Dakota County Drug Task Force (146), and the Anoka-Hennepin Drug Task Force (122).
- Criminal activity involving a controlled substance accounted for 3,136 (82 percent) of the 3,823 forfeiture incidents reported in 2008.
- In addition to the 225 law enforcement agencies that completed forfeitures in 2008, 180 agencies reported that they had no forfeitures, and 95 did not file reports with the Office of the State Auditor.

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

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20090806.000>.

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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>.