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### **\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

## **State Auditor Otto Releases Report on Local Government Lobbying Costs**

*~ Local government lobbying costs decreased 9.3 percent between 2005 and 2006 ~*

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**ST. PAUL (01/10/2008)** – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released a comprehensive report that shows the costs of lobbying services provided to Minnesota local governments and their associations for calendar year 2006. The report is intended to inform Minnesota citizens and policy makers of the amount spent by their local government on lobbying services.

“There is a traditional pattern of lobbying expenses being higher during the longer legislative budget session and lower during the shorter bonding session,” State Auditor Otto said. “Between 2002 and 2005, when the state was faced with a record budget shortfall and cuts in aid to local governments were being considered, the traditional rise and fall cycle of expenditures on lobbying was absent as special sessions and difficult budget negotiations kept lobbyists at the Capitol. However, as the fiscal crises eased between 2005 and 2006, the recognized pattern reemerged and lobbying expenditures decreased on the non-budget year.”

### **Summary of 2006 Local Government Expenditures on Lobbying Services**

According to reports filed with the Office of the State Auditor, local governments in Minnesota spent a total of \$7,063,507 on lobbying activities in 2006. This represents a decrease of \$722,853 or 9.3 percent from the amount spent in 2005.

Sixty-three reporting local governments (20 fewer than in 2005) directly employed or hired contract lobbyists in 2006. These local governments spent a total of \$3,143,062 on staff and contract lobbyists. This was \$524,881 or 14.3 percent less than in 2005. Staff and contract lobbyists are paid to provide information to policy makers so as to influence legislative, administrative, or official actions regarding governmental units in Minnesota. These expenditures do not include dues and membership fees paid to local government associations.

In addition to the \$3.1 million paid directly to staff and contract lobbyists, local governments paid dues of \$9,578,414 in 2006 to local government associations that also represented their interests before the legislature. These associations spent \$3,920,445 on lobbyists and lobbying in 2006. This represents a decrease of 4.8 percent from 2005. Of the \$3.9 million spent on lobbyists and lobbying, \$3,520,235 was funded exclusively through dues. This represents a decrease of 0.6 percent from the \$3,540,058 in association dues that were spent on lobbying activities in 2005.

**For the complete report, which includes tables and graphs, go to**  
[http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/reports/gid/2006/lobby/lobby\\_06\\_report.pdf](http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/reports/gid/2006/lobby/lobby_06_report.pdf).