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

### **State Auditor Otto Releases Special Districts Finance Report**

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**ST. PAUL (5/18/2017)** – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the Special Districts Finance Report, a comprehensive report on the revenues, expenditures and debt of Minnesota’s special districts. The report provides financial information on the 569 special districts that provided financial information to the Office of the State Auditor for fiscal year 2015. This report is intended to provide transparency to the public and policymakers.

Special districts are local government units created or authorized by state law to perform specific duties or to provide specific services in a limited scope. Special districts are often created to address issues that extend beyond traditional local government boundaries. Common functional responsibilities include water management, housing and redevelopment, and mental health and family services. Some of the larger special districts in Minnesota include the Metropolitan Council and the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Highlights from the report include:

- Special districts reported total governmental fund revenues of \$1.2 billion in 2015. The primary sources of revenues for special district governmental funds were taxes (29 percent), state grants (28 percent), charges for services (15 percent), local grants (12 percent), and federal grants (12 percent).
- Special districts reported total governmental expenditures of \$1.2 billion in 2015. Of this amount, \$962.5 million were current expenditures, \$108.5 million were capital expenditures, and \$110.0 million were debt service payments.
- In 2015, special district enterprise operations reported operating revenues of \$2.1 billion, operating expenses of \$2.6 billion, and operating losses of \$520.1 million (operating revenues minus operating expenses). In addition, special district enterprises had nonoperating revenues of \$701.0 million, nonoperating expenses of \$235.7 million, and a net loss of \$54.8 million. Nonoperating revenues include sources such as taxes, intergovernmental grants, and interest income.

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- Special districts reported \$5.7 billion in governmental and enterprise fund outstanding long-term debt (bonds and other long-term debt) in 2015.
- Of the 131 special districts that held long-term debt in 2015, four special districts accounted for \$4.3 billion, or 76 percent, of the total outstanding long-term debt of special districts. The four special districts were the Metropolitan Airports Commission, the Metropolitan Council, the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, and the Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency.

**To view the complete report, which includes an Executive Summary, charts, graphs, and tables, go to:**

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20170517.001>.

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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 18<sup>th</sup> State Auditor. A high-resolution official photo is available for download at [http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/images/otto\\_hires.jpg](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>.*