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

State Auditor Otto Releases Special Districts Finance Report

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ST. PAUL (8/28/2014) – 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 for fiscal year 2012. This report is intended to provide transparency for special districts 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. Minnesota statutes authorize the creation of a variety of special districts. Special districts are often created to address issues that extend beyond traditional local government boundaries. Common functional responsibilities include watershed management, solid waste management, and regional planning and development. 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 \$991.5 million in 2012. The primary sources of revenues for special district governmental funds in 2012 were taxes (31 percent), state grants (27 percent), federal grants (14 percent), charges for services (12 percent), and local grants (10 percent).
- Special districts reported total governmental expenditures of \$1.07 billion in 2012. Of this amount, \$869.9 million were current expenditures, \$108.2 million were capital expenditures, and \$91.8 million were debt service payments.
- In 2012, special district enterprise operations reported operating revenues of \$2.02 billion, operating expenses of \$2.45 billion, and operating losses of \$435.8 million (operating revenues minus operating expenses). In addition, special district enterprises had nonoperating revenues of \$644.1 million, nonoperating expenses of \$215.7 million, and a net loss of \$7.4 million. Nonoperating revenues include sources such as taxes, intergovernmental grants, and interest income.

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- Special districts reported \$5.94 billion in governmental and enterprise fund outstanding long-term debt (bonds and other long-term debt) in 2012. Of the 106 special districts that held long-term debt in 2012, three special districts accounted for \$4.31 billion, or 73 percent of the total outstanding long-term debt of special districts. The three special districts are the Metropolitan Airports Commission, the Metropolitan Council, and the Southern 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=20140827.000>.

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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>.