

Scope and Methodology of Report

This report on the lobbying expenditures of Minnesota counties, cities, school districts and metropolitan agencies is prepared in accordance with Minnesota Statutes §6.76 (1999). The statute requires that:

"(a) On or before January 31 of each year, all counties, cities, school districts, metropolitan agencies, regional railroad authorities, and the metropolitan council shall report to the state auditor, on forms prescribed by the auditor, their estimated expenditures paid for the previous calendar year to a lobbyist as defined in section 10A.01, subdivision 11, except payments to associations of local governments that are reported under paragraph (b), and to any staff person not registered as a lobbyist, over 25 percent of whose time is spent during the legislative session on legislative matters.

(b) Associations of local governments subject to this section shall report annually, on or before January 31, to the state auditor and the association's members the proportionate amount of each member's dues spent for lobbying purposes."

Many state policies, appropriation and tax laws established by the Minnesota Legislature and state administrative agencies have a direct impact on Minnesota's local governments. Therefore, it is appropriate that local governments work with the legislature and administrative agencies in the development of these laws and administrative processes. *This report is not intended to question the appropriate role of local governments in the state's legislative and administrative processes. Instead, it is intended to inform Minnesota citizens and policy makers of the amount spent by their local governments to lobby the legislature.*

The Office of the State Auditor has collected and published this data for lobbying expenditures made by local governments since 1989. This is the fourth year that associations whose membership includes local governments were required to report their lobbying expenditures to the OSA. Because of the inclusion of local government associations, the data presented in this report are not comparable with reports prior to the 1997 report. This report summarizes local government lobbying expenditures during calendar year 2000.

In January of 2001, a lobbying reporting form was mailed to all local governments required to report information on their lobbying activities in accordance with Minnesota Statutes §6.76. The OSA also mailed a separate reporting form to local government associations. The list of local government associations was developed by reviewing a list of all associations that were registered with the Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure Board (formerly known as the Ethical Practices Board). The lobbying expenditures are the amounts reported by local governments and local government associations. The Office of the State Auditor did not attempt to verify the accuracy of those amounts.