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

State Auditor Otto Releases Criminal Forfeitures Report

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ST. PAUL (12/19/2012) – 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 where the final disposition was completed in 2011. The report lists and summarizes forfeiture incidents after final disposition to provide transparency to the public and to inform lawmakers on the nature and frequency of property seized subject to forfeiture.

This report reflects the first full reporting year of data reported after major statutory changes in forfeiture reporting which were enacted by the 2010 Legislature. The statutory changes expanded the scope of information to be reported to the Office of the State Auditor. The changes included broadening the reporting requirements to include forfeitures involving driving under the influence (DUI), game and fish violations, off-road vehicle violations, gambling, and racketeering.

Highlights from the report include:

- In 2011, 292 Minnesota law enforcement agencies reported a total of 6,338 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture. This compares to 271 agencies reporting 4,604 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture in 2010.
- Of the 6,338 forfeiture incidents reported, 4,999 involved seized cash, property that was sold, or an agreement that required monetary compensation to the agency. The total value of net proceeds from these forfeitures was \$6,923,260.
- The agencies with 100 or more forfeiture incidents completed in 2011 were: the Minnesota State Patrol (1,004), the Saint Paul Police Department (448), the Minneapolis Police Department (245), the Southeast Minnesota Drug Task Force (191), the Anoka-Hennepin Drug Task Force (148), the Dakota County Drug Task Force (119), and the CEE-VI Gang & Narcotics Task Force (112).

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- In 2011, vehicles accounted for 58 percent (42 percent in 2010) of property seized, followed by cash at 32 percent (42 percent in 2010), firearms at 8 percent (15 percent in 2010), and other property at 2 percent (1 percent in 2010).
- The most common criminal activities leading to seizure, forfeiture, and final disposition of property in 2011 were controlled substance and DUI-related.

The complete report, which includes an executive summary, tables and graphs, can be accessed at:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20121218.007>.

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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>.