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

State Auditor Otto Releases Criminal Forfeitures Report

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ST. PAUL (6/4/2014) – 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 2013.

Under Minnesota law, property associated with designated criminal offenses may be forfeited. 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.

Highlights from the report include:

- In 2013, 314 Minnesota law enforcement agencies reported a total of 6,955 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture. This compares to 310 agencies reporting 6,851 incidents of property seized subject to forfeiture in 2012.
- Of the 6,955 forfeiture incidents reported, 4,919 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 \$6,925,472. Net proceeds derived from forfeitures ranged from \$1 to \$68,740. Net proceeds per forfeiture incident averaged \$1,408 in 2013.
- In 2013, gross sales of forfeited property or seized cash totaled \$8,777,183; administrative expenses and lien holder obligations totaled \$1,987,573; and net proceeds totaled \$6,925,472.

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- Law enforcement agencies reporting 100 or more forfeiture incidents increased from 8 in 2012 to 10 in 2013. The agencies with 100 or more forfeiture incidents completed in 2013 were: the Minnesota State Patrol (1,007); the Minneapolis Police Department (311); Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Enforcement Division (271); the Dakota County Drug Task Force (210); the Saint Paul Police Department (192); the Southeast Minnesota Drug Task Force (169); the Hennepin County Violent Offenders Task Force (163); the Mille Lacs County Sheriff's Office (137); the Rochester Police Department (126); and the Bloomington Police Department (108).
- In 2013, vehicles accounted for 58 percent (54 percent in 2012) of property seized, followed by cash at 28 percent (33 percent in 2012), firearms at 13 percent (11 percent in 2012), and other property at 2 percent (same as 2012).
- The most common criminal activities leading to seizure, forfeiture, and final disposition of property in 2013 were controlled substance and DUI-related, accounting for 91 percent of the forfeitures. Forfeitures involving a controlled substance accounted for 3,189, or 46 percent, of reported incidents, while DUI-related forfeitures accounted for 3,128, or 45 percent, of reported incidents. The remaining incidents involved game and fish violations (264), fleeing (161), "other" crimes (68), weapons (63), burglary (37), robbery/theft (28), and assault (17).

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

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20140603.002>.

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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>.