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

State Auditor Otto Releases Report on Special Districts

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ST. PAUL (12/8/2010) – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the Special Districts Finance Report, a comprehensive report on Minnesota’s special districts revenues, expenditures and debt for fiscal year 2008. This Report provides financial transparency for 540 special districts for both the public and for lawmakers when considering budgetary and policy issues.

Special districts are often created to address issues that transcend traditional local government boundaries. 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. Some special districts may levy taxes and/or special assessments. Common functions include watershed management, solid waste management, and regional planning and development. Some of the larger special districts in Minnesota include the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Ballpark Authority, and the Metropolitan Airports Commission.

Highlights from the report include:

- Special districts had total governmental fund revenues of \$973.9 million in 2008. The primary sources of revenues for special district governmental funds in 2008 were local grants (32 percent), state grants (24 percent), taxes (20 percent), and charges for services (10 percent).
- Special districts reported total governmental expenditures of \$979.0 million in 2008. Of this amount, \$645.5 million were current expenditures, \$254.9 million were capital expenditures, and \$78.6 million were debt service payments.
- In 2008, special district enterprise operations reported operating revenues of \$1.87 billion, operating expenditures of \$2.26 billion, and operating losses of \$388.8 million (operating revenues minus operating expenses). In addition, special district enterprises had non-operating revenues of \$633.5 million, non-operating expenses of \$285.3 million, and a net loss of \$40.6 million. Non-operating revenues include sources such as taxes, intergovernmental grants, and interest income.
- Special districts reported \$5.54 billion in outstanding long-term debt (bonds and other long-term debt) in 2008.

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

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20101207.004>

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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>