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

State Auditor Otto Releases Criminal Forfeitures Report

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ST. PAUL (6/21/2017) – 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 2016.

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 2016, 320 Minnesota law enforcement agencies reported a total of 7,048 completed forfeitures. This compares to 6,722 completed forfeitures in 2015.
- Of the 7,048 completed forfeitures reported, 4,380 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 \$7,426,740.
- The agencies with 100 or more completed forfeitures in 2016 were: the Minnesota State Patrol (1,039); the Southeast Minnesota Narcotics and Gang Task Force (269); the Dakota County Drug Task Force (232); the Minneapolis Police Department (197); the Saint Paul Police Department (174); the Rochester Police Department (166); the Southwest Hennepin Drug Task Force (148); the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crime Task Force (114); the Shakopee Police Department (104); and the Wright County Sheriff's Office (103).
- In 2016, vehicles accounted for 59 percent of property seized, followed by cash at 28 percent, firearms at 11 percent, and other property at 1 percent.

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- The most common criminal activities leading to seizure, forfeiture, and final disposition of property in 2016 were controlled substance and DUI-related, accounting for 94 percent of the forfeitures. Forfeitures involving a controlled substance accounted for 3,455, or 49 percent, of reported forfeitures, while DUI-related forfeitures accounted for 3,143, or 45 percent, of reported forfeitures.

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

www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20170620.003.

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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>.