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May 2008

Article for *Minnesota Counties*

Office of the State Auditor Helps Enact Common Sense Legislation *~ Reporting due date for county summary budget data changed to January 31st ~*

By Rebecca Otto, State Auditor

The Office of the State Auditor found a problem with a county reporting date in Minnesota Statutes and decided to take action by helping to enact common sense legislation to correct the problem.

Minnesota law required counties to report their summary budget data by December 31st of each year. We found that, in practice, counties were not able to comply with state law because most finalized their budgets in January. With no final budget, the counties could not provide summary budget data on the date state law required them to provide it.

This Office drafted a bill to change the reporting deadline from December 31st to January 31st of each year. With the help of Representative Deb Hilstrom and Senator Claire Robling, we successfully got the bill signed into law by the Governor on April 3rd. The effective date is August 1, 2008, which means that the next time counties need to report summary budget data to the Office of the State Auditor is January 31, 2009.