



REBECCA OTTO
STATE AUDITOR

STATE OF MINNESOTA OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

SUITE 500
525 PARK STREET
SAINT PAUL, MN 55103-2139

(651) 296-2551 (Voice)
(651) 296-4755 (Fax)
state.auditor@state.mn.us (E-mail)
1-800-627-3529 (Relay Service)

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

State Auditor Otto Releases 2009 Report on Local Government Lobbying Costs

~ Local government lobbying costs increased 3.9 percent between 2008 and 2009 ~

Contact: Jim Levi, Office of the State Auditor, (651) 297-3683, Jim.Levi@state.mn.us

ST. PAUL (5/26/2010) – State Auditor Rebecca Otto today released the 2009 Local Government Lobbying Services Report. It is a comprehensive report on the expenditures by local governments and their associations for lobbyists and lobbying services during calendar year 2009. The report is intended to inform the public and policymakers of the amount spent by local governments on lobbying services.

The operation and funding of local governments can be greatly affected by decisions made by the state legislature. Therefore, those affected by these decisions often have representation at the Capitol during the legislative session. This report documents the level of expenditures made by local governments and their associations to perform this function.

“There is a traditional pattern of lobbying expenses being higher during the longer legislative budget session and lower during the shorter bonding session,” said Auditor Otto. “The year 2009 was a budget session. The legislature and Governor had to close a large state budget deficit, which included local government aid cuts,” said Otto. “Lobbying cost increases have been closer to 9% and 10% over the last several years. Considering the circumstances this session, the costs historically would have been higher, but were actually lower.”

Highlights from the report include:

- Local governments spent a total of \$8,879,610 on lobbying activities in 2009. This represents an increase of \$329,592 or 3.9 percent over the amount spent on lobbying services in 2008.
- Seventy-eight local governments (14 more than in 2008) reported that they directly employed staff or hired contract lobbyists in 2009. These local governments spent a total of \$4,429,214 on staff and contract lobbyists. This was \$519,113, or 13.3 percent, more than in 2008.

-- more --

- In addition to the \$4.4 million paid directly to staff and contract lobbyists, local governments paid dues of \$10,205,657 in 2009 to local government associations that also represented their interests before the legislature. These associations spent \$4,450,396 on lobbyists and lobbying in 2009. This represents a decrease of 4.1 percent from 2008. Of the \$4.5 million spent on lobbyists and lobbying by these associations, \$4,376,419 was funded exclusively through dues. This represents an increase of 2.1 percent over the \$4,287,411 in association dues that were spent on lobbying activities in 2008.

To view the complete report, which includes an executive summary, tables and graphs, go to:

<http://www.auditor.state.mn.us/default.aspx?page=20100525.001>.

-- 30 --

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>.