

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IMPROVED GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY TO TAXPAYERS SALUTED

First Six Government Entities Honored for Exceptional Performance Reporting

Alexandria, VA – Recognizing exceptional Accountability Reports, the Association of Government Accountants (AGA) has awarded the first-ever “Certificate of Excellence in Service Efforts and Accomplishments” (SEA), after in-depth evaluation of performance reports submitted by more than 20 governments and government agencies.

The certificates of excellence are awarded to the City of Bellevue, Washington; the City of Charlotte, North Carolina; the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; the City of Portland, Oregon; the City of Saco, Maine and the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Seattle, Washington. The awards will be presented at a ceremony in Portland, Oregon in November 2005.

“Making government more accountable is an ideal that should inspire every public servant.” said AGA Executive Director, Relmond P. Van Daniker, DBA, CPA, “This award for excellence should alert the tax-paying public, Congress, public interest groups and other financial management professionals that state and local government agencies are strenuously working to make the government more accountable and, increasingly, achieving the highest standards. Our program is designed to facilitate this effort and give credit where credit is due. All of the certificate recipients have achieved excellence and it is entirely appropriate that this should be recognized.”

The honors are part of the AGA SEA Program, which encourages regular, high-quality service efforts and accomplishments (SEA) reports, and helps state and local governments effectively communicate their performance to the public. The program was established in conjunction with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and scrutinizes and assesses SEA reports (also called

performance reports), in order to make recommendations for improvements and recognize the best with a Certificate of Excellence.

The number of state and local governments issuing such performance reports has increased substantially following the Governmental Accounting Standards Board's (GASB) release, in April 2003, of *Reporting Performance Information: Suggested Criteria for Effective Communication*.¹ This book, which has become known as 'the Green Book', is a special report setting forth 16 suggested criteria and 11 good practices to guide the preparation of such reports.

The AGA campaign to improve government accountability is motivated by the desire of governments and governmental entities to produce performance reports which are not only complete and comprehensive, but also interesting, informative, and inviting to read. The program gives important outside input so that governments and governmental entities can assess whether the report is fulfilling its purpose of effectively informing readers of the government's performance, and is not intended to evaluate the quality of the government or its performance.

The Association of Government Accountants is a 15,000-member professional Association devoted to meeting the continuing professional education needs of financial managers at all levels of government, the private sector and academia. For more information about the Association, or the Certified Government Financial Manager (CGFM) Program, call 800.AGA.7211, or visit AGA's website at www.agacgfm.org.

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