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FOR RELEASE: Immediate
February 17, 2009

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STRATTON TO RECEIVE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

*Schenectady Mayor among Seven Nationally Selected for Prestigious Leadership Awards
Presented at 7th Annual AGA National Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C.*

SCHENECTADY – Mayor Brian U. Stratton has been selected by the national Association of Government Accounts (AGA) to receive its prestigious **Distinguished Local Government Leadership Award** for outstanding financial leadership and revitalization in the City of Schenectady. The AGA, a national trade association representing more than 15,000 government and private-sector financial management professionals, will present the award to Mayor Stratton during its Seventh Annual National Leadership Conference, February 19-20, in Washington, D.C.

“It is truly an honor to accept this prestigious national management award on behalf of the people of the City of Schenectady, who have sacrificed and worked with us at City Hall in making the tough choices necessary to return our city to financial stability and new opportunity,” Mayor Stratton said.

“Schenectady’s achievements in fiscal management and economic revitalization are not the product of any single individual, rather the result of a true team effort,” the Mayor continued. “Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the support of taxpayers and citizens, without the renewed confidence and significant investment of many outstanding private sector businesses, and without the partnership of my fellow government leaders and public servants, each of whom have worked with me every day with the common goal of bringing our community back.”

The Distinguished Local Government Leadership Award was formally established to recognize local government officials and professionals who exemplify and promote excellence in government financial management and who have demonstrated outstanding leadership in enhancing sound financial management legislation, regulations, practices, policies and systems. The award recognizes the outstanding leadership in local government that led to improved financial management practices, policies, systems or operations and consistently exhibited the highest personal and professional standards.

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AGA is presenting the Award to Mayor Stratton in recognition of the Mayor's efforts to revitalize the City of Schenectady, which was on the brink of financial collapse with a projected \$10.2 million projected deficit and the lowest credit rating by Moody's Investors of any municipality in New York State when he took over as the city's chief executive in 2004.

Under Mayor Stratton's administration, Schenectady's deficit was completely eliminated within two years, and the city finished 2007 with a cumulative surplus of \$10.4 million – a more \$20 million positive swing for the city's financial position in just four years. In addition, Schenectady's credit rating has been improved seven times under Mayor Stratton, moving from Ba3(negative outlook) to Baa1(stable) by Moody's and a new credit rating of A- by Standard & Poor's Rating Agency.

AGA Executive Director Relmond P. Van Daniker said, "Mayor Stratton's outstanding leadership skills and dedication to the financial management of the City of Schenectady have been tremendous. His efforts embody the type of thought-leadership that all local governments should strive to achieve."

More than 700 government and private financial and management professionals from throughout the United States are expected to attend the two-day conference at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, and to be on hand for the award presentation. Seven individual leadership awards will be presented during the conference; three Federal Leadership Awards to be presented on Friday, February 20 and four State and Local Leadership Awards, including Mayor Stratton's award, on Thursday, February 19. **An excerpt of the AGA National Leadership Conference program book title page, and awards listing, is attached to this press release.**

The award will mark the third time Mayor Stratton and his administration have been recognized for outstanding performance. In 2008, the Mayor was awarded the *Outstanding Achievement in Government Accountability Award* by the local New York AGA chapter during its annual meeting in Albany. In addition, the Mayor received the Performance Institute's *2008 City and County National Performance Management Award*, presented during the 2008 Performance Summit Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he delivered the conference keynote address.

Headquartered in Arlington VA, the Association of Government Accountants is a 15,000-member professional association that serves government accountability professionals by providing quality education, fostering professional development and certification, and supporting standards and research to advance government accountability. More information about the association can be obtained by calling 1-800-AGA-7211, or visiting AGA's official website at www.agacfm.org.