



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

CANTON &dash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel stood today with Stark County leaders and announced a partnership between the Ohio Treasurer's office and Stark County to place their spending online at OhioCheckbook.com. Last year, Treasurer Mandel launched OhioCheckbook.com, which sets a new national standard for government transparency and for the first time in Ohio history puts all state spending information on the internet. OhioCheckbook.com recently earned Ohio the number one ranking in the country for government transparency.

Treasurer Mandel was joined at today's announcement by Stark County Auditor Alan Harold, County Commissioners Thomas Bernabei, Janet Weir Creighton and Richard Regula, County Administrator Brant A. Luther and Stark County Treasurer Alexander Zumar. Stark County is the seventh county in Ohio and third county in Northeast Ohio to announce a partnership with the Treasurer's office to place their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

On April 7th, Treasurer Mandel sent a letter to 18,062 local government and school officials representing 3,962 local governments throughout the state calling on them to place their checkbook level data on OhioCheckbook.com and extending an invitation to partner with his office at no cost to local governments. These local governments include cities, counties, townships, schools, library districts and other special districts.

"I believe the people of Stark County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with the Treasurer's office to post their finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "My vision is to create an army of citizen watchdogs who are empowered to hold public officials accountable."

"Every day my office fields requests from taxpayers seeking information on how their dollars are being spent," said Stark County Auditor Alan Harold. "We are proud to partner with the Treasurer's office to make spending in Stark County even more transparent to our citizens. I hope that providing this information on-line sparks a renewed interest in how our local government operates and where it spends taxpayer dollars."

"Transparency in government is healthy for both our citizens and our elected officials," said Stark County Commissioner Janet Weir Creighton. "We welcome OhioCheckbook.com to Stark County and hope our taxpayers take advantage of all the information it offers."

"I applaud Stark County officials for taking this important step to improve financial transparency and accountability," said Senator Frank LaRose (District &dash; 27). "The county's collaboration with the Ohio Treasurer's office to make its checkbook available online demonstrates a firm commitment to managing taxpayers' dollars wisely."

A large coalition of statewide and local government organizations have expressed support for OhioCheckbook.com and local government transparency, including:

- Ohio Municipal League
- Ohio Township Association
- Ohio Association of School Business Officials
- Buckeye Association of School Administrators
- County Commissioner Association of Ohio
- County Auditor Association of Ohio
- Ohio Newspaper Association
- Ohio Society of CPAs
- Buckeye Institute

30 EAST BROAD STREET · 9TH FLOOR · COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215  
PHONE: (614) 466-2160 · WWW.OHIOTREASURER.GOV · FAX: (614) 644-7313



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### Common Cause Ohio

OhioCheckbook.com was launched on December 2, 2014, marking the first time in Ohio history when citizens could actually see every expenditure in state government. Since its launch, OhioCheckbook.com has received overwhelming support from newspapers and groups across the state and, as of June 8, 2015, there have been more than 230,000 total searches on the site. OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$408 billion in spending over the past seven years, including more than 112 million transactions. The website includes cutting-edge features such as:

- “Google-style” contextual search capabilities, to allow users to sort by keyword, department, category or vendor;
- Fully dynamic interactive charts to drill down on state spending;
- Functionality to compare state spending year-over-year or among agencies; and,
- Capability to share charts or checks with social media networks, and direct contact for agency fiscal offices.

In March, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group (U.S. PIRG) released their annual “Following the Money 2015” report and Treasurer Mandel earned Ohio the number one transparency ranking in the country for providing online access to government spending data. Ohio was prominently featured in the report after climbing from 46th to 1st in spending transparency as a result of Treasurer Mandel’s release of OhioCheckbook.com. Due to the launch of OhioCheckbook.com, Ohio received a perfect score of 100 points this year &ndash; the highest score in the history of the U.S. PIRG transparency rankings. The Treasurer’s office is partnering with OpenGov, a leading Silicon Valley government technology company, to provide residents of Ohio the ability to view and search local government expenditures in a user-friendly, digital format. “Ohio is setting the standard for financial transparency on an unprecedented scale. We are excited to partner with the Treasurer’s office to bring world-class technology to communities large and small across the state,” said Zachary Bookman, CEO of OpenGov. For more information visit [OhioCheckbook.com](http://OhioCheckbook.com).

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