



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Builds for Statewide Government Transparency as OhioCheckbook.com Surpasses 250,000 Searches in the First Seven Months

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

DAYTON &dash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel stood today with Montgomery County officials and announced a partnership with the Ohio Treasurer's office 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 Montgomery County Auditor Karl Keith, State Senator Bill Beagle (District &dash; 5), State Representative Niraj Antani (District &dash; 42) and State Representative Jim Butler (District &dash; 41). Montgomery County is the third county in Southwest Ohio to partner with OhioCheckbook.com. Montgomery County is also the tenth county in Ohio to announce a partnership with the Treasurer's office to place their spending online.

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 Montgomery 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."

"The Montgomery County Auditor's Office prides itself on serving the public in the most open and transparent ways possible," said Montgomery County Auditor Karl Keith. "This partnership will continue our ongoing commitment of using new innovation and technology to make government more accessible and accountable."

"This is a great day for transparency and for the people of Montgomery County," said State Senator Bill Beagle. "Soon any citizen will be able to see exactly how their tax dollars are being spent. The commissioners should be proud to be leading the way toward opening up county government to the people."

"Josh Mandel's OhioCheckbook.com initiative has moved our state up to number one in the nation in transparency," said State Representative Niraj Antani. "I'm happy that Montgomery County is joining this initiative. A more transparent government will result in better stewardship of taxpayer dollars."

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

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Ohio Newspaper Association  
Ohio Society of CPAs  
Buckeye Institute  
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 July 6, 2015, there have been more than 250,000 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 — 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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