



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

The Columbus Dispatch

Editorial

August 8, 2015

An investment of \$2.7 million over the next two years is a sound one to fund Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel's "online checkbook" government-transparency initiative. The money approved by the Ohio Controlling Board is less than half of the \$6 million Mandel's office has identified in operating savings over prior years, so it doesn't represent a spending increase.

OhioCheckbook.com, launched late last year, provides a user-friendly database on state spending for the past seven years. It makes available public information online that is searchable by category, vendor and agency.

After putting state spending online, Mandel's next goal was to get cities, counties, townships, schools, library districts and other special districts to put their own checkbook data online. More than 240 already have committed to, including Delaware and Franklin counties. This money will encourage development of the resource.

Ohio's online checkbook already has garnered praise from national government-transparency groups. Earlier this year, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group ranked Ohio best in the nation for its state-level transparency on government spending. As more of this data is put online, it should enable residents to monitor how public money is being spent and to compare their city, county or township with others around the state. This is important and powerful information for taxpayers.

####