



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 450 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

SUNBURY &ndash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the Village of Sunbury online checkbook on OhioCheckbook.com. In December 2014, 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.

The Ohio Treasurer's office was joined by Village Administrator Allen Rothermel and Fiscal Officer Kathy Belcher. The Village of Sunbury's online checkbook includes over 12,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$24 million of total spending over the past 4 years. The Village of Sunbury is the second village in Delaware County to partner with the Treasurer's office to post their spending online.

"I believe the people of Delaware County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent, and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with my office to post the finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "By posting local government spending online, we are empowering taxpayers across Ohio to hold public officials accountable."

"The Village of Sunbury is excited to be participating with the State of Ohio on OhioCheckbook.com," said Village Administrator Allen Rothermel. "What an excellent way of showing our taxpayers how each of the participating jurisdictions truly 'walk the talk' by showing their financial transactions in an open and easy to read format. What's even better is you have made the transmission of our existing financial data a stream-lined and simple process that takes very little time to prepare. Thanks again for this innovative initiative in bringing open government to the taxpayer."

On April 7, 2015 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.

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

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County Auditor Association of Ohio  
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 January 5, 2016 there have been more than 425,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$496 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 135 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 2015, 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 or to view your local government website, visit the Local Government option on OhioCheckbook.com or click on Sunbury.OhioCheckbook.com.

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