



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 475 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

BROOKVILLE &ndash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the City of Brookville, Jackson Township and Jefferson Township online checkbooks 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 at today's announcement by Brookville Mayor David Seagraves, Jackson Township Fiscal Officer Diana Winkler and Jefferson Township Fiscal Officer Tracey Edwards. The City of Brookville is the fourth city in Montgomery County to post their spending online and Jefferson Township and Jackson Township are the first townships in Montgomery County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

The following is a breakdown of today's sites:

Brookville's online checkbook includes over 17,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$33 million of total spending over the past four years.

Jackson Township's online checkbook includes over 7,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$5 million of total spending over the past three years.

Jefferson Township's online checkbook includes over 4,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$4 million of total spending over the past two years.

"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 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 City of Brookville is excited to take our transparency to the next level," said City of Brookville Mayor David Seagraves, City Manager Gary Burkholder and Director of Finance Sonja Keaton in a combined statement. "The local site will provide information in an easily navigated format that helps our citizens understand how their tax dollars are being spent. We look forward to making Brookville more open and accessible."

"This tool serves as an important means of communication and enables us to educate the township's residents on how their money is being spent," said Jackson Township Fiscal Officer Diana Winkler.

"The OhioCheckbook.com initiative is a great tool for Jefferson Township to use to communicate with our community," said

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Jefferson Township Fiscal Officer Tracey Edwards. "We are proud to show that we are transparent with our taxpayers."

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
- 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 19, 2016 there have been more than 435,000 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 — the highest score in the history of the U.S. PIRG transparency rankings.

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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](http://OhioCheckbook.com) or click on:

[Brookville.OhioCheckbook.com](http://Brookville.OhioCheckbook.com);  
[JacksonTownshipMontgomery.OhioCheckbook.com](http://JacksonTownshipMontgomery.OhioCheckbook.com);  
[JeffersonTownshipMontgomery.OhioCheckbook.com](http://JeffersonTownshipMontgomery.OhioCheckbook.com).

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