



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 890 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

RITTMAN & Creston; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the City of Rittman, Village of Doylestown and the Village of Creston's 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 government transparency ranking in the country for a second year in a row.

The Ohio Treasurer's office was joined at today's announcement by City of Rittman Fiscal Officer Pam Keener. Rittman is the first city in Wayne County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com, and Doylestown and Creston are the fourth and fifth villages in Wayne County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

The following is a breakdown of today's local government sites:

Rittman's online checkbook includes over 41,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$33.9 million of total spending over the past five years.

Doylestown's online checkbook includes over 13,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$7 million of total spending over the past three Fiscal Years.

Creston's online checkbook includes over 6,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$2.1 million of total spending over the past two years.

"I believe the people of Wayne 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."

"Doylestown is pleased to be a leader in transparency for its residents and within Wayne County," said Fiscal Officer Kristen Robison. "By joining OhioCheckbook.com, our community can view how their hard earned tax dollars are being spent from the comfort of their home."

"Creston is pleased to join with other Wayne County communities who are posting their expenditures on OhioCheckbook.com," said Fiscal Officer Pam Hostetler. "This movement in transparency is great for taxpayers as well as elected officials."

"It's good to see our local partners adding to our transparency," said State Representative Ron Amstutz.

"I want to congratulate the City of Rittman, and the Villages of Doylestown and Creston for demonstrating a clear commitment to

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transparency by moving their checkbook online," said State Senator Frank LaRose. "This is an important step to improve accountability and responsiveness to local 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 September 29, 2016 there have been more than 635,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$540 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 148 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

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perfect score of 100 points this year – the highest score in the history of the U.S. PIRG transparency rankings.

In April 2016, U.S. PIRG announced that Treasurer Mandel earned Ohio the number one government transparency ranking in the country for the second consecutive year in a row. Due to the launch of OhioCheckbook.com, Ohio again received the highest perfect score of 100 points this year – marking the second time in two years Ohio received the highest possible 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:

Rittman.OhioCheckbook.com;
Doylestown.OhioCheckbook.com;
Creston.OhioCheckbook.com.

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