



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

COLUMBUS – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel applauded today the unanimous passage of House Bill 46, legislation that would require the Ohio Treasurer's office to publish and maintain an online database of state spending. HB 46 will now move to the Ohio Senate for further consideration.

Treasurer Mandel launched OhioCheckbook.com on December 2, 2014, posting all state spending online for the first time in Ohio history. OhioCheckbook.com includes more than \$408 billion worth of spending over the past seven fiscal years, displaying approximately 112 million transactions and approximately 3.9 billion pieces of spending information. Since its launch, OhioCheckbook.com has received overwhelming support from newspapers and groups across the state and, as of April 10, 2015, there have been more than 178,000 total searches on the site.

Last month, the U.S. Public Interest Research Group released their annual "Following the Money 2015" report and Treasurer Mandel and OhioCheckbook.com earned Ohio the number one transparency ranking in the country. As a result of OhioCheckbook.com, Ohio climbed from 46th to 1st in spending transparency and received a perfect score of 100 points for access to online expenditures – the highest score in the history of the U.S. PIRG transparency rankings.

House Bill 46, sponsored by Rep. Mike Dovilla (District 7 - Berea) and Rep. Jonathan Dever (District 28 - Cincinnati) would require the Ohio Treasurer to continue to host and publish this fully searchable state agency expenditures database online. This legislation also places in statute a requirement that the Treasurer's office host fully searchable databases that display salaries of state employees and local school district education employees.

"OhioCheckbook.com is an important tool that empowers taxpayers to hold their public officials accountable," said Treasurer Mandel. "I applaud the Ohio House of Representatives for passing HB 46 and I urge the Senate to take swift action and enshrine OhioCheckbook.com into law so that future generations have access to this unprecedented level of transparency."

OhioCheckbook.com is part of the Treasurer's Transparency Project, which was launched by Treasurer Mandel in 2011. The project builds upon a fully searchable database of state employee salaries, detailed reports of county investments, an interactive state property map and an online archive of Annual Treasurer of State Reports dating back to the early 1800's.

For more information on the Treasurer's Transparency Project, please visit our website at www.ohiotreasurer.gov/Transparency.
SUPPORT FOR OHIOCHECKBOOK.COM & HB 46:

"Kudos to Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel for unveiling the best website I've seen to easily slice-and-dice how government spends money. OhioCheckbook.com is a great tool for journalists and anyone who supports open government in Ohio. Treasurer Mandel has done a service to all of Ohio with this website, and it's very important to put into statute that it continues to be maintained into the future."

- Dennis Hetzel, Executive Director of the Ohio Newspaper Association and President of the Ohio Coalition for Open Government

"Access to state spending online encourages the public to ask questions and government officials to be thrifty. Ongoing access to this information is important because it reinforces government accountability to taxpayers."

- Catherine Turcer, Common Cause Ohio

"Efforts like the Ohio Checkbook are critical for the future of transparency in Ohio. In the long-run, the only way Ohio taxpayers are going to be able to hold government accountable for how it spends their money is to see exactly what the government is doing. This lies at the heart of what The Buckeye Institute has long pushed for with our own public salary databases."

- Greg Lawson, The Buckeye Institute

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"The Ohio Society of CPAs has long supported increased transparency throughout government. Treasurer Mandel's online checkbook helps open the books for taxpayers across Ohio and is a step in the right direction when it comes to increasing government transparency."

- Scott Wiley, President and CEO of the Ohio Society of CPAs

"As an organization that advocates for open government, the Sunlight Foundation finds that when governments put valuable public information online, citizens have greater access to it and can more effectively use it to ensure that government is working in their best interests. By requiring that the state make government expenditure data available online in easily searchable, sortable, and downloadable formats, the expenditure database described in HB 46 represents an important demonstration of state's interest in being transparent and accountable to its citizens. We very much hope that the legislature will decide to pass this bill."

- Emily Shaw, Sunlight Foundation

LIST OF HB 46 CO-SPONSORS:

Rep. John Becker (District – 65; Union Township)

Rep. Louis Blessing (District-29; Colerain Township)

Rep. Terry Boose (District-57; Norwalk)

Rep. Tim Brown (District-3; Bowling Green)

Rep. Timothy Derickson (District-53; Hanover Township)

Rep. Mike Duffey (District-21; Worthington)

Rep. Cheryl Grossman (District-23; Grove City)

Rep. Bob Hackett (District-74; London)

Rep. Steve Hambley (District-69; Brunswick)

Rep. Steve Huffman (District-80; Tipp City)

Rep. Terry Johnson (District-90; McDermott)

Rep. Stephanie Kunze (District-24; Hilliard)

Rep. Ron Maag (District-62; Lebanon)

Rep. Rick Perales (District 73; Beavercreek)

Rep. Jeff Rezabek (District-43; Clayton)

Rep. Kristina Roegner (District-37; Hudson)

Rep. Mark Romanchuk (District-2; Ontario)

Rep. Tim Schaffer (District-77; Lancaster)

Rep. Gary Scherer (District-92; Circleville)

Rep. Martin Sweeney (District-14; Cleveland)

Rep. Andrew Thompson (District-95; Marietta)

Rep. Nino Vitale (District-85; Urbana)

Rep. Paul Zeltwanger (District-54; Mason)

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