



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By Sarah Reed
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Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced the partnership of the Ohio Treasurer's Office and the Village of Ashville during a Pickaway Progress Partnership (P3) meeting held at Berger Hospital Friday.

"I'd like to applaud the village of Ashville for being one of the first in the state to volunteer to put their finances online," stated Mandel.

"This financial analysis platform supports public servants with fast, accurate analysis of taxpayer money and how it's being used," stated Ashville Mayor Charles Wise. "We are happy to join the state and local governments that are now already relying on this program."

In April, Mandel's office sent more than 18,000 letters to local government and school officials in the nearly 4,000 Ohio local governments in regards to the need for spending transparency.

Mandel explained he had received an overwhelmingly positive response in regards to the OhioCheckbook.com transparency initiative.

OhioCheckbook.com was launched Dec. 2, 2014, and is the first site of its kind in the nation. It has set a new national standard regarding government transparency. Ohio's transparency ranking went from 46th to first in the nation after this initiative was launched.

The U.S. Public Interest Research Group announced Ohio's transparency score was a perfect 100 points — the highest score in the history of these rankings.

"What I'm doing by putting the state's checkbook online is empowering tax payers to hold politicians accountable," explained Mandel. "It means that every day citizens now have the power to hold the politician's feet to the fire. And we're just getting started. Now that we have the state's checkbook online, our next step is to get the cities, villages, school districts, counties online as well."

The site displays over \$408 billion in spending over the course of the past seven years.

Mandel stated it would not cost anything to the local governments to put their finances online.

"I'm a big believer in making government small and people big, and my inspiration for doing this is try to empower every day citizens to hold politicians accountable. I'm a big believer in power to the people and I think the more we can put power in the hands of the citizens the more limited and more efficient our government will be," said Mandel.

In April, Mandel visited Circleville to announce this new initiative.

Pickaway County and Darby Twp. were among the first local governments to agree to publish their spending online.

For more information visit OhioCheckbook.com.

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