



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Builds for Statewide Government Transparency as OhioCheckbook.com Surpasses 235,000 Searches in the First Six Months

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

ELMORE &dash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced partnerships between the Ohio Treasurer's office and Port Clinton City Schools, Danbury Township, the City of Port Clinton, Marblehead Village and Genoa Area Local Schools today to place their spending online at OhioCheckbook.com. Last year, 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.

Treasurer Mandel announced the partnerships at a meeting of the Ottawa County Improvement Corporation in Elmore today and presented an interactive demonstration of OhioCheckbook.com to attendees. Treasurer Mandel was joined at today's announcement by Port Clinton City School District Treasurer Jeff Dornbusch, Port Clinton Auditor Cole Hatfield and Marblehead Village Fiscal Officer Rhonda Sowers. These local governments are the first entities in Ottawa County to announce a partnership with the Treasurer's office to place their spending online.

On April 7th, 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.

"I believe the people of Ottawa County have a right to know how their tax money is being spent and I applaud local leaders here for partnering with the Treasurer's office to post their finances on OhioCheckbook.com," said Treasurer Mandel. "My vision is to create an army of citizen watchdogs who are empowered to hold public officials accountable."

"We have always supported efforts for transparency at Port Clinton City Schools," said Port Clinton City Schools Treasurer Jeff Dornbusch. "Financial information is available on our website, newsletters, our local cable TV show and we also encourage any resident who has a question to either call or stop in to the treasurer's office."

"As a publically elected official, it has always been my belief that I am the people's employee," said Port Clinton Auditor Cole Hatfield. "This is why I fully support Treasurer Mandel's efforts to establish OhioCheckbook.com, as it effectively creates an openness regarding how funds are utilized within the public sector, and is a stepping stone to creating a stronger relationship and understanding for the individuals we serve on a daily basis."

"OhioCheckbook.com is a great resource for the Village of Marblehead and we are proud to partner with the Ohio Treasurer's office," said Marblehead Village Fiscal Officer Rhonda Sowers. "Transparency has become increasingly important to citizens and we are happy to be on the forefront by providing access through OhioCheckbook.com."

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

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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 June 16, 2015, there have been more than 235,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$408 billion in spending over the past seven years, including more than 112 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, 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 visit [OhioCheckbook.com](http://OhioCheckbook.com).

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