



# JOSH MANDEL

## STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 880 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

ROCKBRIDGE &dash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of Good Hope Township and Marion Township'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 Good Hope Township Fiscal Officer Jack McGrady. Good Hope Township and Marion Township are the first local governments in Hocking County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

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

Good Hope Township's online checkbook includes over 2,100 individual transactions that represent more than \$1.1 million of total spending over the past three years.

Marion Township's online checkbook includes over 2,600 individual transactions that represent more than \$1.5 million of total spending over the past three years.

"I believe the people of Hocking 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."

"Good Hope Township is proud to partner with the Treasurer's Office on this cutting edge transparency tool," said Fiscal Officer Jack McGrady. "The service is provided at no cost to the township and will allow residents to see how their hard earned tax dollars are being spent."

"As your independently elected Fiscal Officer, I believe transparency is key to ensuring public funds are spent wisely and efficiently. I also believe it is important to leverage modern technology to share information with our taxpayers," said Fiscal Officer Holly Sheets. This website will provide a more visual and accessible format than a standard public records request would, as our accounting software is a bit limited in the reports that can be generated. I can already see how valuable this tool will be in preparing our annual budget! I am pleased that the State Treasurer's Office is providing this service at no cost to local governments and now the people of Marion Township can easily access OhioCheckbook.com to see where and how their hard earned tax dollars are being spent."

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"I would like to commend Good Hope and Marion Townships on increasing transparency in how tax dollars are being spent," said State Senator Troy Balderson. "Strong transparency ensures accountability and encourages our officials to use public resources in an efficient manner."

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 26, 2016 there have been more than 633,000 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.

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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.

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 &ndash; 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:

[GoodHopeTownshipHocking.OhioCheckbook.com](http://GoodHopeTownshipHocking.OhioCheckbook.com);  
[MarionTownshipHocking.OhioCheckbook.com](http://MarionTownshipHocking.OhioCheckbook.com).

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