



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 1,200 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

CAMBRIDGE— Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the Guernsey County and Village of Lore City'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 the second year in a row.

Treasurer Mandel was joined at today's announcement by Guernsey County Auditor Tony Brown and Guernsey County Commissioner Dave Wilson. Guernsey County is the first county in Eastern Ohio to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com. The Village of Lore City is the fourth village in Guernsey County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

Guernsey County and Lore City are the 1,200th and 1,199th local governments to partner with OhioCheckbook.com.

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

- Guernsey County's online checkbook includes over 31,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$134 million of total spending over Fiscal Year 2016.
- Lore City's online checkbook includes over 2,300 individual transactions that represent more than \$937,000 of total spending over the past four years.

"I believe the people of Guernsey 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."

"I believe the County Auditor should be a leader in the county on the principle of complete transparency in local government," said Guernsey County Auditor Tony Brown. "By joining this statewide initiative, we will be providing greater financial detail to our citizens. As elected officials, we will show our constituents how their tax dollars are spent."

"The public needs to know where their money is being spent," said Lore City Clerk-Treasurer Sharon Carpenter. "Our partnership with OhioCheckbook.com allows us to continue to be advocates in transparency!"

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,

30 EAST BROAD STREET · 9TH FLOOR · COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215
PHONE: (614) 466-2160 · WWW.OHIOTREASURER.GOV · FAX: (614) 644-7313



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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 August 22, 2017 there have been more than 812,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$598 billion in spending over the past nine years, including more than 164 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 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.

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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:

- GuernseyCounty.OhioCheckbook.com;
- LoreCity.OhioCheckbook.com.

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