



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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By David Wright

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WILMINGTON – Clinton County's finances will soon be available online.

Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel visited the Clinton County commissioners' office Monday — standing with Ohio Speaker of the House Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville), Clinton County Auditor Terry Habermehl and Clinton County Commissioners Pat Haley, Mike Curry and Kerry Steed — to announce a partnership between Clinton County and the Ohio Treasurer's Office to put the county's finances online at ohiocheckbook.com.

Mandel launched the website last year, putting the state's entire checkbook online in a push toward governmental transparency. All the state's finances are available in a searchable database format on the website, and now county governments, municipalities, school districts and other local entities around the state are joining in.

Mandel said he wants ohiocheckbook.com to bring government transparency into modern times.

"We can be Blockbuster, or Netflix," he said Monday. "We could be taxi cabs, or Uber."

Clinton County Auditor Terry Habermehl said ever since he came into office, transparency and modernization have been high priorities.

"I ran on a platform of transparency," he said, saying the taxpayers should be able to access county finances for themselves. "I believe they have a right to know."

Mandel told the News Journal the county's finances will be available online by Labor Day.

According to Mandel, there are 3,962 local government entities in the state of Ohio. Mandel said he sent letters to 18,062 government and school officials in April asking if they would partner with the treasurer's office to put their finances online.

Clinton County, Mandel said, is the ninth county to sign up.

Mandel said his mission is to empower taxpayers to hold local governments accountable, and to apply public pressure to government entities that are dragging their feet.

"This is public information that everybody has a right to see," he said.

According to Mandel, there are currently \$408 billion in government funds being displayed onohiocheckbook.com.

Mandel said the Public Interest Research Group, founded by Ralph Nader, rated Ohio number one in the nation for governmental transparency.

Prior to the inception of ohiocheckbook.com, Ohio was ranked 46th.

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