



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

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More local governments in the Mahoning Valley are opting to place their checkbooks online.

During the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber's "Salute to Business," breakfast Thursday, Ohio Republican Treasurer Josh Mandel announced that his office established partnerships with Boardman Township, Boardman Township Park District, city of Columbiana and Trumbull County to place their spending online at OhioCheckbook.com.

Mandel launched the site last year to post state spending and setting a national standard for government transparency. He said he wanted to empower the people to hold politicians accountable.

"My vision is to create an army of citizen watchdogs," he said.

Mandel provided a quick demonstration of the Internet-based system for Chamber members at the breakfast to learn where taxpayer money is spent. He said he hopes it dissuades government officials from spending money on frivolous items such as luxury hotels or trips to Hawaii.

In April, Mahoning County was the first Ohio county to post its finances. Youngstown also announced that it would participate in that same month. Mandel said he's leveraging the Valley's leadership to encourage other local and state government entities to join.

As of Thursday, the list statewide includes 278 participating local governments. While state spending is now available, local government financial information will be online before the end of the year, he said.

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