



JOSH MANDEL

STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 600 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

WARREN ‐ Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the Trumbull County, Howland Local Schools and Weathersfield Township online checkbooks on OhioCheckbook.com. Also announced today is a partnership with the Village of Lordstown and the Ohio Treasurer's office to post the village's spending 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 ranking in the country for government transparency.

The Ohio Treasurer's office was joined at today's announcement by Trumbull County Auditor Adrian Biviano, Treasurer Sam Lamancusa, Commissioners Frank Fuda, Mauro Cantalamessa and David Polivka, IT Director Dave Ranttila and System Administrator Mark Malacky. Also joining today's announcement were Howland Local Schools Treasurer Rhonda Baldwin-Amorganos, Board of Education President Scott Lehman and Weathersfield Township Administrator Dr. David Rouan.

Trumbull County is the fourteenth county in Ohio to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com. Howland Local Schools is the third school district in Trumbull County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com, and Weathersfield Township is the first township in Trumbull County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

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

Trumbull County's online checkbook includes over 145,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$1.3 billion of total spending over the past three years.

Howland Local Schools' online checkbook includes over 30,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$84 million of total spending over the past three Fiscal Years.

Weathersfield Township's online checkbook includes over 4,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$2 million of total spending over the past year.

"I believe the people of Trumbull 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."

"Trumbull County is proud to join OhioCheckbook.com as a leader in government transparency," said Trumbull County Auditor Adrian Biviano. "Through this initiative, we are able to provide citizens with greater public access to the finances of Trumbull County."

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



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"OhioCheckbook.com gives our taxpayers unique electronic access to navigate public records and information like never before," said Howland Local Schools Superintendent Kevin Spicher. "We can now assert to the Howland Community that we value their support and hold ourselves to the most accountable fiscal practices - resulting in optimal and efficient use of resources refocused on educating our kids."

"Weathersfield Township is proud to stand with other Trumbull County officials as leaders in the transparency movement," said Weathersfield Township Administrator David Rouan. "By providing this information publicly, our citizens can easily track how their tax dollars are being spent."

"The Village of Lordstown is partnering with the Treasurer's office on OhioCheckbook.com to show our commitment to transparency," said Village of Lordstown Clerk William Blank. "By participating in this program, our citizens can easily access and view the ways which their tax dollars are being spent in the community."

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 March 21, 2016 there have been more than 486,000 total searches on the site.

OhioCheckbook.com displays more than \$512 billion in spending over the past eight years, including more than 139 million

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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.

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:

- TrumbullCounty.OhioCheckbook.com;
- HowlandLocalSchools.OhioCheckbook.com;
- WeathersfieldTownshipTrumbull.OhioCheckbook.com.

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