JOSH MANDEL
STATE TREASURER OF OHIO

Momentum Grows for Statewide Government Transparency with Over 615 Local Government and School Districts Partnering with OhioCheckbook.com

Press Release - Ohio Treasurer's Office

SPRINGFIELD – Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the West Central Ohio Port Authority online checkbook 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 West Central Ohio Port Authority Secretary-Treasurer Louis Agresta. The West Central Ohio Port Authority is the second port authority in Ohio to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

The West Central Ohio Port Authority's online checkbook includes over 160 individual transactions that represent more than $630,000 of total spending over Fiscal Year 2014.

"I believe the people of Clark 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."

"The West Central Ohio Port Authority is proud to join OhioCheckbook.com and provide our citizens with an interactive tool to view public information," said Secretary-Treasurer Louis Agresta. "We are happy to continue our commitment to 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, 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

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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 29, 2016 there have been more than 492,000 total searches on the site.

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

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