



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

WEST LIBERTY & ndash; Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel announced today the launch of the Village of West Liberty, Village of Belle Center, Village of DeGraff and Village of Quincy 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 ranking in the country for government transparency.

The Ohio Treasurer's office was joined at today's announcement by Village of West Liberty Treasurer Cindee Boyd, Village of Belle Center Mayor Teresa Johnston, Village of DeGraff Mayor Gary Comer, Village of DeGraff Treasurer Linda Harford and Village of Quincy Fiscal Officer Sandra Ward. The Villages of West Liberty, Belle Center, DeGraff and Quincy are the third, fourth, fifth and sixth villages in Logan County to post their spending on OhioCheckbook.com.

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

The Village of West Liberty's online checkbook includes over 12,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$5 million of total spending over the past three years.

The Village of Belle Center's online checkbook includes over 6,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$1 million of total spending over the past four years.

The Village of DeGraff's online checkbook includes over 2,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$870,000 of total spending over the past two years.

The Village of Quincy's online checkbook includes over 4,000 individual transactions that represent more than \$810,000 of total spending over the past three years.

"I believe the people of Logan 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."

"We believe this is a powerful tool for our constituents and we are very excited to join other entities around Logan county and the state to increase transparency," said Village of West Liberty Treasurer Cindee Boyd.

"We believe this is a powerful tool for both our constituents and our leadership to use to help Belle Center become more transparent," said Village of Belle Center Mayor Teresa Johnston.

"We're are excited to partner with OhioCheckbook.com to allow our constituents the opportunity to be better informed on where

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their hard earned tax payer dollars are spent,” said Village of DeGraff Treasurer Linda Harford.

“We believe this is a powerful tool for our constituents to understand how the Village of Quincy spends hard earned tax payer dollars,” said Village of Quincy Fiscal Officer Sandra Ward.

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 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

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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:

WestLiberty.OhioCheckbook.com;
BelleCenter.OhioCheckbook.com;
DeGraff.OhioCheckbook.com;
Quincy.OhioCheckbook.com.

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