

## NEWS

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### **Online Database Detailing Public Sector Finances Launched**

The Cleveland-based [Fund for Our Economic Future](#) has announced the launch of an online [database](#) that details what the public sector in the sixteen-county Northeast Ohio region collect in taxes and spend on services.

Developed by the [Center for Governmental Research \(CGR\)](#) and supported by the fund, the [Greater Cleveland Partnership](#), the [Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce](#), the [Youngstown-Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce](#), and the [George Gund and Samuel H. and Maria Miller](#) foundations, the database makes it possible for users to compare government expenditures in Northeast Ohio with expenditures in five other regions of the country.

In its examination of government spending, CGR found that the 656 government entities (counties, municipalities, townships, special districts, and school districts) in the state's most recent (2002) Census of Governments reported total spending of nearly \$16 billion. The actual total, however, is thought to be higher due to underreporting. The study also found that spending rose by 68 percent, from \$9.25 billion to \$15.7 billion, for the 604 entities that provided data in the three most recent censuses. The inflation rate in the Midwest for that period was approximately 29 percent.

"The online database allows Ohio taxpayers, government officials, students in classrooms, and anyone else to find out what a particular local government is paying for, where it gets its revenues, and how costs compare with selected peer areas," said Charles Zettek, Jr., director of government management services for CGR. "In essence, people now have at their fingertips an interactive 'data dictionary' that they can use in countless ways to educate themselves about local governments in the Northeast Ohio region."

*"Regional Database Detailing Cost of Local Governments Developed, Available to Public." Fund for Our Economic Future Press Release 7/14/08.*

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