



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 12, 2017

Ms. Cynthia Tynan
Senior Attorney & Public Information Coordinator
Office of General Counsel
The University of Texas System
201 West 7th Street, Suite 600
Austin, Texas 78701-2901

OR2017-00887

Dear Ms. Tynan:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 641470 (OGC# 172400).

The University of Texas at Arlington (the "university") received a request for information related to a specified bid. Although you take no position with respect to the public availability of the submitted information, you state the proprietary interests of a third party might be implicated. Accordingly, you inform us, and provide documentation showing, you notified Cauthen & Associates, Inc. ("Cauthen") of the request and of its right to submit comments to this office as to why the requested information should not be released to the requestor. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (determining that statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception to disclosure under the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why requested information relating to that party should be withheld from disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, this office has not received comments from Cauthen explaining why its information should not be released to the requestor. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the third party vendor has a protected proprietary

interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (stating business enterprise claiming exception for commercial or financial information under section 552.110(b) must show by specific factual evidence release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the university may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of the proprietary interest Cauthen may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the submitted information must be released.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Kavid Singh
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KVS/som

Ref: ID# 641470

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)