



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 10, 2017

Ms. Barbara L. Klein
Deputy General Counsel
Texas Department of State Health Services
P.O. Box 149347
Austin, Texas 78714

OR2017-18169

Dear Ms. Klein:

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# 670570 (DSHS 27170).

The Texas Department of State Health Services (the "department") received a request for information pertaining to a specified requisition.¹ You state you have released some information. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of some of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of PCMG, Inc. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation demonstrating, you notified the third party of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue should not be released. *See Gov't Code § 552.305(d); see also Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances).* We have reviewed the submitted information.

We note 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) of the Government Code to submit

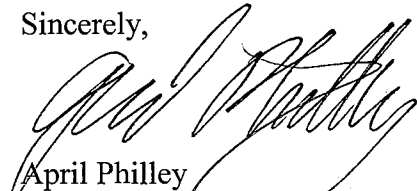
¹We note the department sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); see also City of Dallas v. Abbott, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or over-broad request for public information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).*

its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from the third party explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the third party has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the department may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest the third party may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the department must release the submitted information.

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,



April Philley
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

AP/sb

Ref: ID# 670570

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

1 Third Party
(w/o enclosures)