



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 20, 2018

Ms. Ana Vieira Ayala
Assistant General Counsel & Public Information Coordinator
The University of Texas System
210 West 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2901

OR2018-03885

Dear Ms. Ayala:

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# 696625 (OGC# 178435).

The University of Texas System (the "system") received a request for the winning proposal from a prior bid for specified services. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.104 of the Government Code. You also state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Wolcott & Associates, Inc. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, the system notified this third party of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information 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 considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information that, if released, would give advantage to a competitor or bidder." Gov't Code § 552.104(a). The "test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder's [or competitor's information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage." *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831 (Tex. 2015). You represent the submitted information pertains to a closed competitive bidding situation for claims audit services. However, you

state the system is currently seeking bids for the same services. Further, you state no contracts for the current bidding process have been awarded. After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find you have established the release of the information would give advantage to a competitor or bidder. Thus, the system may withhold the submitted information under section 552.104(a) of the Government Code.

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,



Kieran Hillis
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

KH/sb

Ref: ID# 696625

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

1 Third Party
(w/o enclosures)