



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 15, 2019

Ms. Tangerla Williams
Temporary Assistant General Counsel
Dallas Area Rapid Transit
P.o. Box 660163
Dallas, Texas 75266-0163

OR2019-13015

Dear Ms. Williams:

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# 765545 (ORR# W003679).

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit ("DART") received a request for current revenue agreements between DART and ECHO Transportation ("ECHO"). Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of ECHO.¹ Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified ECHO of the request and its right to submit arguments to this office. *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.

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to

¹We note, and you acknowledge, DART did not comply with section 552.301 of the Government Code in requesting this decision. *See* Gov't Code § 552.301(e). Nevertheless, the interests of a third party can provide a compelling reason to overcome the presumption of openness. *See id.* §§ 552.007, .302, .352. Thus, we will consider whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act, notwithstanding DART's violation of section 552.301 in requesting this decision.

that party should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this ruling, we have not received comments from ECHO. Thus, we have no basis to conclude ECHO has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); 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, DART may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest ECHO may have in the information.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release.² *See* Gov't Code § 552.130. Accordingly, DART must withhold the submitted license plate and vehicle identification numbers under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

Section 552.136(b) of the Government Code provides, "[n]otwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential." *Id.* § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining "access device"). Upon review, we find DART must withhold the bank account number in the remaining information under section 552.136 of the Government Code.

In summary, DART must withhold the submitted license plate and vehicle identification numbers under section 552.130 of the Government Code. DART must withhold the bank account number in the remaining information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. DART must release the remaining 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

²The Office of the Attorney General will raise mandatory exceptions on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily Kunst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Emily Kunst
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EK/jxd

Ref: ID# 765545

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party
(w/o enclosures)