



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 29, 2019

Mr. Sid Pounds
Public Information Coordinator
Texas Department of Insurance
P.O. Box 149104
Austin, Texas 78714-9104

OR2019-20753

Dear Mr. Pounds:

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# 7776705 (ORR# R004260).

The Texas Department of Insurance (the "department") received a request for specified information pertaining to long-term care insurance model regulations. The department states it is releasing some of the requested information. The department does not take a position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act. However, the department states, and provides documentation showing, it notified State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company ("State Farm") of the department's receipt of the request for information and of State Farm's right to submit arguments to this office as to why the requested information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 at 3 (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 under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why requested information relating to it should be withheld from disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, State Farm has not submitted to this office any reasons explaining why the requested information should not be released. Accordingly,

we have no basis for concluding the submitted information constitutes proprietary information of that third party, and the department may not withhold any portion of it on that basis. See 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. Therefore, 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,



Debbie K. Lee
Assistant Attorney General
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

DKL/mo

Ref: ID# 777605

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

2 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)