



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 30, 2019

Mr. Blake C. Billings
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Tech University System
P. O. Box 42021
Lubbock, Texas 79409-2021

OR2019-20910

Dear Mr. Billings:

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# 777033.

Texas Tech University System (the "university") received a request for a specified contract. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of GCA Services Group ("GCA"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified GCA 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 received comments from a representative of GCA. We have considered the submitted arguments and reviewed the submitted information.

We note the submitted information is subject to section 2261.253 of the Government Code. Section 2261.253 provides, in relevant part, as follows:

- (a) For each contract for the purchase of goods or services from a private vendor, each state agency shall post on its Internet website:

(1) each contract the agency enters into, including contracts entered into without inviting, advertising for, or otherwise requiring competitive bidding before selection of the contractor, until the contract expires or is completed[.]

...

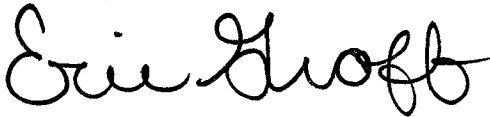
(b) A state agency monthly may post contracts described by Subsection (a) that are valued less than \$15,000.

Gov't Code § 2261.253(a)(1), (b). The submitted contract is valued at more than \$15,000; is between the university, which is a state agency, and GCA, which is a private vendor, for the purchase of services; and the contract is not expired or completed. Thus, the contract at issue is subject to section 2261.253 of the Government Code. Although GCA seeks to withhold portions of the information at issue under sections 552.104 and 552.110 of the Government Code, we note the exceptions to disclosure found in the Act generally do not apply to information that other statutes make public. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 623 at 3 (1994), 525 at 3 (1989). Accordingly, the university may not withhold any portion of the contract and incorporated exhibits GCA seeks to withhold under section 552.104 or section 552.110 of the Government Code. The university 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,



Erin Groff
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EMG/jxd

Ref: ID# 777033

c: Requestor

Third Party