



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 15, 2019

Ms. Claudene Marshall
Assistant General Counsel
Texas A&M University System
301 Tarrow Street, 6th Floor
College Station, Texas 77840-7896

OR2019-22619

Dear Ms. Marshall:

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# 781046 (ORR# C001145-052419).

Texas A&M University (the "university") received a request for information pertaining to library serials contracts. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act, you state release of the information at issue may implicate the proprietary interests of Elsevier B.V.; John Wiley & Sons, Inc.; SAGE Publications, Inc.; and Springer Nature. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation demonstrating, you notified these third parties of the request for information and of their 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 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 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 any of the third parties explaining why the information at issue should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the third parties have a protected proprietary interest in any portion of 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 university may not withhold any portion of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest the third parties may have in it. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, 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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,

Michelle Case
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MC/be

Ref: ID# 781046

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

4 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)