



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 13, 2020

Mr. Joseph Behnke
Assistant General Counsel
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, Texas 78711

OR2020-01203

Dear Mr. Behnke:

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# 806610 (Ref. No. 441-19).

The Office of the Governor (the "governor's office") received a request for certain information pertaining to Minimed Distribution Corporation ("Minimed"). Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of Minimed. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified Minimed 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 considered the submitted information, a portion of which consists of a representative sample.¹

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 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 Minimed. Thus, we have no basis to

¹ We assume that the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

conclude Minimed 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, the governor's office may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Minimed may have in the information. The governor's office 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,



Meredith L. Coffman
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MLC/mo

Ref: ID# 806610

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)