



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 6, 2020

Ms. Ashley K. Addo  
Counsel for the Texas City Independent School District  
Thompson & Horton, LLP  
Phoenix Tower, Suite 2000  
3200 Southwest Freeway  
Houston, Texas 77027-7554

OR2020-28007

Dear Ms. Addo:

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# 852321.

The Texas City Independent School District (the "district"), which you represent, received a request for a specified bid tabulation. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.104 of the Government Code. You also state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Challenge Office Supply; Ferguson Facility Supply; Gateway Printing & Office Supply; Gulf Coast Paper; Klein Janitorial Supply; Mavich; Medco Sports Medicine; NCH Corporation; School Specialty, Inc.; Simplot Turf & Horticulture; and Unipak Corporation. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified these interested 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 considered the exception you claim and 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 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 any of the interested parties. Thus, we have no basis to conclude any of the interested parties has a protected proprietary interest

in the submitted information. *See, e.g., id.* § 552.110 (requiring the provision of specific factual evidence demonstrating the applicability of the exception). Accordingly, the district may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest any of the interested parties may have in the information.

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that a governmental body demonstrates, if released, would “harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation or in a particular competitive situation where the governmental body establishes the situation at issue is set to reoccur or there is a specific and demonstrable intent to enter into the competitive situation again in the future.” *Id.* § 552.104(a). The “test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder’s [or competitor’s information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage.” *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831, 841 (Tex. 2015). After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find the district has failed to demonstrate the applicability of section 552.104 to the information at issue. Thus, we conclude the district may not withhold the information at issue under section 552.104(a) of the Government Code. The district 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/gw

Ref: ID# 852321

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)