



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

June 7, 2022

Mr. R. Brooks Moore
Deputy General Counsel
Texas A&M University System
301 Tarrow Street, 6th Floor
College Station, Texas 77840-7896

OR2022-16333

Dear Mr. Moore:

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# 952354 (Ref. No. G000678-031622).

The Texas A&M University System (the "university") received a request for a specified contract and specified purchase orders. 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 Wellspring Worldwide LLC ("Worldwide"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified Worldwide 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) 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 Worldwide explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude Worldwide 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). Thus, the university

may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Worldwide may have in the information.

Section 552.136 of the Government Code provides, “[n]otwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential.”¹ *Id.* § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). Accordingly, the university must withhold the routing and bank account numbers we marked under section 552.136 of the Government Code. The university must release the remaining 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,

Sarah E. Reese
Attorney
Open Records Division

SER/mo

Ref: ID# 952354

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

¹ The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).