



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 20, 2022

Ms. Cynthia Tynan
Assistant General Counsel
The University of Texas System
210 West 7th Street
Austin, Texas 78701-2903

OR2022-39539

Dear Ms. Tynan:

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# 991691 (OGC# 207465).

The University of Texas at Tyler (the "university") received a request for specified reports submitted to the university by a third party. Although the university takes no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, the university states release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of U.S. News & World Report ("USNWR"). Accordingly, the university states, and provides documentation showing, it notified USNWR of the request for information and of the 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 USNWR explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude USNWR 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 university may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest USNWR may have in the information. 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,

Colin Henry
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CEH/jxd

Ref: ID# 991691

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)