



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

October 15, 2010

Mr. David K. Walker  
County Attorney  
Montgomery County  
207 West Phillips, Suite 100  
Conroe, Texas 77301

OR2010-15732

Dear Mr. Walker:

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# 397769 (ORR#2010-3175).

The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office (the "sheriff") received a request for information pertaining to the arrests of two named individuals. You claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses the doctrine of common-law privacy, which protects information that (1) contains highly intimate or embarrassing facts, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person, and (2) is not of legitimate concern to the public. *Indus. Found. v. Tex. Indus. Accident Bd.*, 540 S.W.2d 668, 685 (Tex. 1976). To demonstrate the applicability of common-law privacy, both prongs of this test must be satisfied. *Id.* at 681-82. A compilation of an individual's criminal history is highly embarrassing information, the publication of which would be highly objectionable to a reasonable person. *Cf. U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Reporters Comm. for Freedom of the Press*, 489 U.S. 749, 764 (1989) (when considering prong regarding individual's privacy interest, court recognized distinction between public records found in courthouse files and local police stations and compiled summary of information and noted that individual has

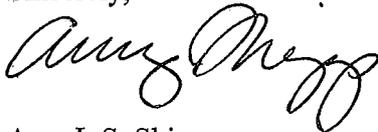
significant privacy interest in compilation of one's criminal history). Furthermore, we find that a compilation of a private citizen's criminal history is generally not of legitimate concern to the public.

The present request requires the sheriff to compile unspecified law enforcement records concerning the individuals named in the request. We find this request for unspecified law enforcement records implicates the named individuals' right to privacy. Therefore, to the extent the sheriff maintains law enforcement records depicting the named individuals as suspects, arrestees, or criminal defendants, the sheriff must withhold any such information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with common-law privacy.

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 [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index\\_orl.php](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Amy L.S. Shipp  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

ALS/tp

Ref: ID# 397769

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)