



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 5, 2011

Mr. Robert Almonte
Assistant City Attorney
City of El Paso
2 Civic Center Plaza 9th Floor
El Paso, Texas 79901

OR2011-17878

Dear Mr. Almonte:

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# 443416.

The El Paso Police Department (the “department”) received a request for information related to a specified case number. You state some of the requested information has been released. You claim the rest of the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.108 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the information you submitted.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov’t Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body must reasonably explain how and why section 552.108 is applicable to the information at issue. *See id.* § 552.301(e)(1)(A); *Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the information at issue is related to ongoing investigation. Based on your representation, we conclude section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable in this instance. *See Houston Chronicle Publ’g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests present in active cases), *writ ref’d n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976).

We note the information at issue includes a statutory warning, which we have marked. Because a copy of a statutory warning is provided to the person who is the subject of the

warning, we find release of the statutory warning will not interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See* Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). Therefore, the statutory warning may not be withheld under section 552.108.

We also note section 552.108 does not except from disclosure “basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime.” *Id.* § 552.108(c). Section 552.108(c) refers to the basic front-page offense and arrest information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. *See* 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; Open Records Decision No. 127 at 3-4 (1976) (summarizing types of information deemed public by *Houston Chronicle*). Thus, as you indicate basic information has been released, the department may withhold the information at issue under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code, except for the statutory warning.

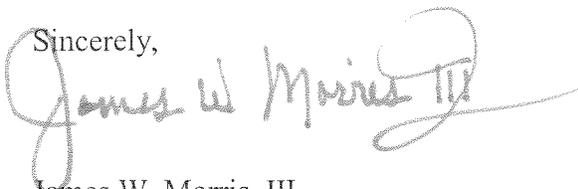
Lastly, we note the statutory warning contains a driver's license number. Section 552.130 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information relating to a motor vehicle operator's or driver's license or permit issued by an agency of this state or another state or country. *See* Act of May 24, 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., S.B. 1638, § 4 (to be codified as an amendment to Gov't Code § 552.130). The department must withhold the driver's license number we have marked under section 552.130 of the Government Code.

In summary, the department (1) may withhold the information at issue under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code, except for the statutory warning; (2) must withhold the marked driver's license number in the warning under section 552.130 of the Government Code; and (3) must release the remaining information in the warning.

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, 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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James W. Morris, III". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

James W. Morris, III
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JWM/em

Ref: ID# 443416

Enc: Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)