



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 16, 2016

Ms. Andrea Sheehan
Assistant General Counsel
Texas Association of School Boards
P.O. Box 400
Austin, Texas 78759-2439

OR2016-06063

Dear Ms. Sheehan:

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# 601930.

The Texas Association of School Boards, Inc., custodian of records for the Texas Local Government Purchasing Cooperative d/b/a BuyBoard (the "cooperative"), received a request for the rental price lists for specified companies pertaining to a specified contract.¹ Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of Unifirst Corporation and G&K Services. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified these interested parties of the request and their right to submit arguments to this office. *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 submitted information.

¹You state the cooperative sought and received clarification of the request for information. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222(b) (stating if information requested is unclear to governmental body or if large amount of information has been requested, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify or narrow request, but may not inquire into purpose for which information will be used); *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380 (Tex. 2010) (holding when governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification of unclear or overbroad request for public information, ten-business-day period to request attorney general opinion is measured from date request is clarified or narrowed).

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 either of the interested parties. Thus, we have no basis to conclude either of the interested parties has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the cooperative may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest either of the interested parties may have in the information. As we have received no arguments against disclosure, the submitted information must be released.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Meredith L. Coffman
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MLC/bw

Ref: ID# 601930

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

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(w/o enclosures)

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