



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

September 22, 2016

Mr. Hector M. Benavides
Counsel for Northside Independent School District
Walsh Gallegos Trevino Russo & Kyle P.C.
P.O. Box 460606
San Antonio, Texas 78246

OR2016-21452

Dear Mr. Benavides:

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# 627779.

The Northside Independent School District (the "district"), which you represent, received a request for information related to three specified requests for proposals. You state you will withhold insurance policy numbers pursuant to section 552.136(c) of the Government Code.¹ Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state some the submitted information is protected by copyright and release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of General Coatings Corporation ("General") and Cleanology Service & Supply ("Cleanology"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified General and Cleanology 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.

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

¹Section 552.136(c) of the Government Code allows a governmental body to redact the information described in section 552.136(b) without the necessity of seeking a decision from the attorney general. *See* Gov't Code § 552.136(c). If a governmental body redacts such information, it must notify the requestor in accordance with section 552.136(e). *See id.* § 552.136(d), (e).

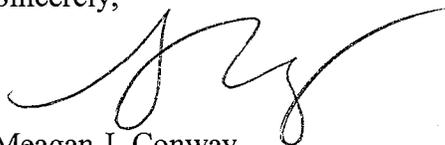
information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from General or Cleanology explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude General or Cleanology has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; 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 district may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest General and Cleanology may have in the information.

You state some of the submitted information is protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. Thus, as no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the district must release the submitted information; however, any information subject to copyright must be released in accordance with copyright law.

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,



Meagan J. Conway
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MJC/akg

Ref: ID# 627779

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

2 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)