



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 8, 2009

Mr. Scott A. Kelly
Interim General Counsel
Texas A&M University
200 Technology Way, Suite 2079
College Station, Texas 77845-3424

OR2009-17300

Dear Mr. Kelly:

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# 368737.

Texas A&M University (the "university") received a request for a list containing the e-mail addresses of Turkish students, faculty, and staff. You state the university is withholding some information pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g.¹ You claim that portions of the submitted information are excepted from disclosure under section 552.137 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.137 of the Government Code requires a governmental body to withhold the e-mail address of a member of the general public, unless the individual to whom the e-mail address belongs has affirmatively consented to its public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.137(b). The e-mail addresses at issue are not a type specifically excluded by

¹The United States Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office (the "DOE") has informed this office that FERPA does not permit state and local educational authorities to disclose to this office, without parental consent, unredacted, personally identifiable information contained in education records for the purpose of our review in the open records ruling process under the Act. The DOE has determined that FERPA determinations must be made by the educational authority in possession of the education records. We have posted a copy of the letter from the DOE to this office on the Attorney General's website: <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/20060725usdoe.pdf>.

section 552.137(c). *See id.* § 552.137(c). Moreover, you inform us the university has not received consent for the release of the e-mail addresses at issue. Therefore, the university must withhold the e-mail addresses that you have marked under section 552.137 of the Government Code. The remaining 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.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,



Paige Lay
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

PL/eeg

Ref: ID# 368737

Enc. Submitted documents

cc: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)