



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 22, 2015

Mr. Bob Davis
Staff Attorney
General Counsel Division
Texas Department of Insurance
P.O. Box 149104
Austin, Texas 78714-9104

OR2015-22223

Dear Mr. Davis:

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# 584175 (TDI# 164264).

The Texas Department of Insurance (the "department") received a request for four specified rate filings. You state you have released a portion of the information to the requestor. You state you will redact personal e-mail addresses under section 552.137 of the Government Code pursuant to Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009).¹ Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of National Lloyds Insurance Company. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified this third party of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the requested 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 information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code

¹We note Open Records Decision No. 684 is a previous determination to all governmental bodies authorizing them to withhold certain information, including an e-mail address of a member of the public under section 552.137 of the Government Code, without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision.

§ 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from the interested third party explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the third party 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 department may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interests the third party may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the department must release the submitted information.

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,



Ellen Webking
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

EW/akg

Ref: ID# 584175

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

National Lloyds Insurance Company
P.O. Box 2650
Waco, Texas 76702
(w/o enclosures)