



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 8, 2015

Mr. Robert N. Jones, Jr.  
Assistant General Counsel  
Texas Workforce Commission  
101 East 15th Street  
Austin, Texas 78778-0001

OR2015-25680

Dear Mr. Jones:

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# 590126 (TWC ORR ID #150918-015).

The Texas Workforce Commission (the "commission") received a request for financial statements of Innovative Education Solutions, LLC ("IES"), d/b/a International Business College, submitted to the commission during a specified time period. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of IES. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified IES of the request for information and of its 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.

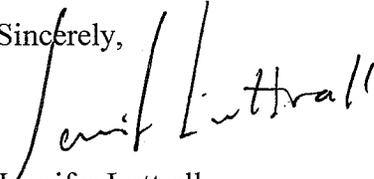
Initially, we note an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B)*. As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from IES explaining why its information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude IES 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 commission may not withhold any of the information at issue on the basis of any proprietary interest IES may have in it.

We note some of the remaining information consists of personal e-mail addresses subject to section 552.137 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> Section 552.137 excepts from disclosure “an e-mail address of a member of the public that is provided for the purpose of communicating electronically with a governmental body,” unless the member of the public consents to its release or the e-mail address is of a type specifically excluded by subsection (c). *See* Gov’t Code § 552.137(a)-(c). The e-mail addresses at issue are not a type specifically excluded by section 552.137(c). Accordingly, the commission must withhold the e-mail addresses we have marked under section 552.137 of the Government Code, unless the owners of the e-mail addresses affirmatively consent to their disclosure. 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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](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,  
  
Jennifer Luttrall  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JL/akg

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<sup>1</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body. Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

Ref: ID# 590126

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Lee Chayes  
Innovative Education Solutions  
1155 North Zaragosa, Suite 100  
El Paso, Texas 79907  
(w/o enclosures)