

- SUBJECT:** Revising the disclosure of certain appraisal district records
- COMMITTEE:** Ways and Means — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 9 ayes — Meyer, Thierry, Button, Cole, Guerra, Murphy, Noble, Rodriguez, Shine
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — Martinez Fischer, Sanford
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 20 — 30-1 (Creighton)
- WITNESSES:** For — Marya Crigler, Texas Association of Appraisal Districts; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Kirk Broaddus; Susana Carranza; Dorothy Ann Compton; Richard DeOtte; Yvette DeOtte; Vanessa MacDougal; Robert Norris)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Korry Castillo, Comptroller of Public Accounts)
- BACKGROUND:** Under Tax Code sec. 552.149(b), a property owner or agent may, on request, obtain from the chief appraiser of an appraisal district a copy of certain information before a protest hearing. In addition, the owner or agent may request comparable sales data from a reasonable number of sales that was relevant to any matter to be determined by the appraisal review board at the protest hearing. Information obtained under these provisions remains confidential in the possession of the owner or agent and may not be disclosed or used for any purpose except as evidence or argument at the hearing.
- Sec. 552.149(e) provides that the section applies to information or data related to real property located in a county with a population of more than 50,000.

Interested parties have noted that while certain information may be received by a property owner for use during the protest process, similar language does not exist to allow property owners to receive this information in arbitrations. Some have called for authorizing this so that appraisal districts were not prohibited from releasing this private property information. Additionally, some suggest eliminating the bracket providing the privacy exceptions only for counties with populations of more than 50,000 to allow this information to be shared in smaller counties.

**DIGEST:**

SB 334 would allow a property owner or agent to obtain from the chief appraiser of an appraisal district, on request, comparable sales data that was relevant to any matter to be determined by the arbitrator at the hearing on the property owner's appeal of the appraisal review board's order determining the property owner's protest. The bill would extend the current exception from the prohibition against disclosure or use of certain information to the use of the information at the arbitration hearing.

The bill also would repeal the provision limiting the application of the section governing the public disclosure exception of certain records received from the comptroller or chief appraiser to records related to real property located in a county with a population of more than 50,000.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2021. The bill would apply only to a request received by the chief appraiser on or after the effective date.