

AN ACT

relating to the confidentiality of certain information contained in applications for ad valorem tax exemptions; providing criminal penalties.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 11, Tax Code, is amended by adding Section 11.48 to read as follows:

Sec. 11.48. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION. (a) A driver's license number, personal identification certificate number, or social security account number provided in an application for an exemption filed with a chief appraiser is confidential and not open to public inspection. The information may not be disclosed to anyone other than an employee of the appraisal office who appraises property, except as authorized by Subsection (b).

(b) Information made confidential by this section may be disclosed:

(1) in a judicial or administrative proceeding pursuant to a lawful subpoena;

(2) to the person who filed the application or to the person's representative authorized in writing to receive the information;

(3) to the comptroller and the comptroller's employees authorized by the comptroller in writing to receive the information or to an assessor or a chief appraiser if requested in writing;

1           (4) in a judicial or administrative proceeding  
2 relating to property taxation to which the person who filed the  
3 application is a party; or

4           (5) if and to the extent the information is required to  
5 be included in a public document or record that the appraisal office  
6 is required by law to prepare or maintain.

7           (c) A person who legally has access to an application for an  
8 exemption or who legally obtains the information from the  
9 application made confidential by this section commits an offense if  
10 the person knowingly:

11           (1) permits inspection of the confidential  
12 information by a person not authorized by Subsection (b) to inspect  
13 the information; or

14           (2) discloses the confidential information to a person  
15 not authorized by Subsection (b) to receive the information.

16           (d) An offense under Subsection (c) is a Class B  
17 misdemeanor.

18           SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2003.

H.B. No. 500

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 500 was passed by the House on April 10, 2003, by a non-record vote.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 500 was passed by the Senate on May 28, 2003, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Governor