

By: Romero, Jr.

H.B. No. 1630

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to certain limitations on settlement agreements with a governmental unit.

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

SECTION 1. Title 5, Civil Practice and Remedies Code, is amended by adding Chapter 116 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 116. LIMITATION ON SETTLEMENT OF CLAIM OR ACTION AGAINST A GOVERNMENTAL UNIT

Sec. 116.001. CERTAIN LIMITATIONS ON SETTLEMENT BY A GOVERNMENTAL UNIT. (a) In this chapter, "governmental unit" has the meaning assigned by Section 101.001.

(b) A state or local governmental unit may not enter into a settlement of a claim or action against the governmental unit in which:

(1) the amount of the settlement is equal to or greater than \$30,000; and

(2) a condition of the settlement requires a party seeking affirmative relief against the governmental unit to agree not to disclose any fact, allegation, evidence, or other matter to any other person, including a journalist or other member of the media.

(c) A governmental unit may not disclose the personal information of a party seeking affirmative relief unless the party agrees to the disclosure.

1 (d) A settlement agreement in violation of Subsection
2 (b)(2) is void and unenforceable.

3 (e) This chapter does not affect information that is
4 privileged or confidential under other law.

5 SECTION 2. The change in law made by this Act applies to the
6 settlement of a claim or action with respect to which the cause of
7 action on which the claim or action is based accrues on or after the
8 effective date of this Act. A claim or action with respect to which
9 the cause of action on which the claim or action is based accrues
10 before the effective date of this Act is governed by the law in
11 effect immediately before that date, and that law is continued in
12 effect for that purpose.

13 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.