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By:  Fallon S.B. No. 730

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the nonconfidential status of certain state pension information.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 552.0038, Government Code, is amended by amending Subsections (c), (h), and (i) and adding Subsection (h-1) to read as follows:

(c)  Except as provided by Subsection (h-1), records [~~Records~~] of individual members, annuitants, retirees, beneficiaries, alternate payees, program participants, or persons eligible for benefits from a retirement system under a retirement plan or program administered by the retirement system that are in the custody of the system or in the custody of an administering firm, a carrier, or another governmental agency, including the comptroller, acting in cooperation with or on behalf of the retirement system are confidential and not subject to public disclosure. The retirement system, administering firm, carrier, or governmental agency is not required to accept or comply with a request for a record or information about a record or to seek an opinion from the attorney general because the records are exempt from the provisions of this chapter, except as otherwise provided by this section.

(h)  Except as provided by Subsection (h-1), the [~~The~~] retirement system has sole discretion in determining whether a record is subject to this section. For purposes of this section, a record includes any identifying information about a person, living or deceased, who is or was a member, annuitant, retiree, beneficiary, alternate payee, program participant, or person eligible for benefits from the retirement system under any retirement plan or program administered by the retirement system.

(h-1)  This subsection applies only to a person who is or was a member of the legislature and receives a service retirement annuity from the Employees Retirement System of Texas. For a person to whom this subsection applies, the Employees Retirement System of Texas may not withhold as confidential the person's name or the amount of the person's annuity.

(i)  Except as provided by Subsection (h-1), to [~~To~~] the extent of a conflict between this section and any other law with respect to the confidential information held by a public retirement system or other entity described by Subsection (c) concerning an individual member, annuitant, retiree, beneficiary, alternate payee, program participant, or person eligible for benefits from the retirement system, the prevailing provision is the provision that provides the greater substantive and procedural protection for the privacy of information concerning that individual member, annuitant, retiree, beneficiary, alternate payee, program participant, or person eligible for benefits.

SECTION 2.  Sections 815.503(a) and (e), Government Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a)  Except as provided by Section 552.0038(h-1), records [~~Records~~] of members, annuitants, retirees, beneficiaries, and alternate payees under retirement plans administered by the retirement system that are in the custody of the system or of an administering firm, carrier, or other governmental agency acting in cooperation with or on behalf of the retirement system are confidential and not subject to public disclosure, and the retirement system, administering firm, carrier, or governmental agency is not required to accept or comply with a request for a record or information about a record or to seek an opinion from the attorney general, because the records are exempt from the public access provisions of Chapter 552, except as otherwise provided by this section.

(e)  Except as provided by Section 552.0038(h-1), the [~~The~~] retirement system has sole discretion in determining if a record is subject to this section. For purposes of this section, a record includes any identifying information about a person, living or deceased, who is or was a member, annuitant, retiree, beneficiary, or alternate payee, under any retirement plan or program administered by the retirement system.

SECTION 3.  Section 552.0038(h-1), Government Code, as added by this Act, applies only to a request for information received by the Employees Retirement System of Texas on or after the effective date of this Act. A request for information received before that date is governed by the law in effect on the date the request is received, and that law is continued in effect for that purpose.

SECTION 4.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2019.