

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2008 SESSION

CHAPTER 71

An Act to amend and reenact § 2.2-3705.6 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 32.1-276.5:1, relating to the disclosure by hospitals of contractual arrangements in certain provider contracts.

[H 603]

Approved March 2, 2008

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 2.2-3705.6 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 32.1-276.5:1 as follows:

§ 2.2-3705.6. Exclusions to application of chapter; proprietary records and trade secrets.

The following records are excluded from the provisions of this chapter but may be disclosed by the custodian in his discretion, except where such disclosure is prohibited by law:

1. Proprietary information gathered by or for the Virginia Port Authority as provided in § 62.1-132.4 or 62.1-134.1.

2. Financial statements not publicly available filed with applications for industrial development financings in accordance with Chapter 49 (§ 15.2-4900 et seq.) of Title 15.2.

3. Confidential proprietary records, voluntarily provided by private business pursuant to a promise of confidentiality from the Department of Business Assistance, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the Virginia Tourism Authority, the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission, a nonprofit, nonstock corporation created pursuant to § 2.2-2240.1, or local or regional industrial or economic development authorities or organizations, used by the Department, the Partnership, the Authority, or such entities for business, trade and tourism development; and memoranda, working papers or other records related to businesses that are considering locating or expanding in Virginia, prepared by such entities, where competition or bargaining is involved and where, if such records are made public, the financial interest of the governmental unit would be adversely affected.

4. Information that was filed as confidential under the Toxic Substances Information Act (§ 32.1-239 et seq.), as such Act existed prior to July 1, 1992.

5. Fisheries data that would permit identification of any person or vessel, except when required by court order as specified in § 28.2-204.

6. Confidential financial statements, balance sheets, trade secrets, and revenue and cost projections provided to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, provided such information is exempt under the federal Freedom of Information Act or the federal Interstate Commerce Act or other laws administered by the Surface Transportation Board or the Federal Railroad Administration with respect to data provided in confidence to the Surface Transportation Board and the Federal Railroad Administration.

7. Confidential proprietary records related to inventory and sales, voluntarily provided by private energy suppliers to the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, used by that Department for energy contingency planning purposes or for developing consolidated statistical information on energy supplies.

8. Confidential proprietary information furnished to the Board of Medical Assistance Services or the Medicaid Prior Authorization Advisory Committee pursuant to Article 4 (§ 32.1-331.12 et seq.) of Chapter 10 of Title 32.1.

9. Proprietary, commercial or financial information, balance sheets, trade secrets, and revenue and cost projections provided by a private transportation business to the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation for the purpose of conducting transportation studies needed to obtain grants or other financial assistance under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (P.L. 105-178) for transportation projects, provided such information is exempt under the federal Freedom of Information Act or the federal Interstate Commerce Act or other laws administered by the Surface Transportation Board or the Federal Railroad Administration with respect to data provided in confidence to the Surface Transportation Board and the Federal Railroad Administration. However, the exemption provided by this subdivision shall not apply to any wholly owned subsidiary of a public body.

10. Confidential information designated as provided in subsection D of § 2.2-4342 as trade secrets or proprietary information by any person who has submitted to a public body an application for prequalification to bid on public construction projects in accordance with subsection B of § 2.2-4317.

11. a. Memoranda, staff evaluations, or other records prepared by the responsible public entity, its staff, outside advisors, or consultants exclusively for the evaluation and negotiation of proposals filed under the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 (§ 56-556 et seq.) or the Public Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002 (§ 56-575.1 et seq.), where (i) if such records were made public

prior to or after the execution of an interim or a comprehensive agreement, § 56-573.1:1 or 56-575.17 notwithstanding, the financial interest or bargaining position of the public entity would be adversely affected, and (ii) the basis for the determination required in clause (i) is documented in writing by the responsible public entity; and

b. Records provided by a private entity to a responsible public entity, affected jurisdiction, or affected local jurisdiction pursuant to the provisions of the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 or the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002, to the extent that such records contain (i) trade secrets of the private entity as defined in the Uniform Trade Secrets Act (§ 59.1-336 et seq.); (ii) financial records of the private entity, including balance sheets and financial statements, that are not generally available to the public through regulatory disclosure or otherwise; or (iii) other information submitted by the private entity, where, if the records were made public prior to the execution of an interim agreement or a comprehensive agreement, the financial interest or bargaining position of the public or private entity would be adversely affected. In order for the records specified in clauses (i), (ii) and (iii) to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the private entity shall make a written request to the responsible public entity:

1. Invoking such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought;

2. Identifying with specificity the data or other materials for which protection is sought; and

3. Stating the reasons why protection is necessary.

The responsible public entity shall determine whether the requested exclusion from disclosure is necessary to protect the trade secrets or financial records of the private entity. To protect other records submitted by the private entity from disclosure, the responsible public entity shall determine whether public disclosure prior to the execution of an interim agreement or a comprehensive agreement would adversely affect the financial interest or bargaining position of the public or private entity. The responsible public entity shall make a written determination of the nature and scope of the protection to be afforded by the responsible public entity under this subdivision. Once a written determination is made by the responsible public entity, the records afforded protection under this subdivision shall continue to be protected from disclosure when in the possession of any affected jurisdiction or affected local jurisdiction.

Except as specifically provided in subdivision 11 a, nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to authorize the withholding of (a) procurement records as required by § 56-573.1:1 or 56-575.17; (b) information concerning the terms and conditions of any interim or comprehensive agreement, service contract, lease, partnership, or any agreement of any kind entered into by the responsible public entity and the private entity; (c) information concerning the terms and conditions of any financing arrangement that involves the use of any public funds; or (d) information concerning the performance of any private entity developing or operating a qualifying transportation facility or a qualifying project.

For the purposes of this subdivision, the terms "affected jurisdiction," "affected local jurisdiction," "comprehensive agreement," "interim agreement," "qualifying project," "qualifying transportation facility," "responsible public entity," and "private entity" shall mean the same as those terms are defined in the Public-Private Transportation Act of 1995 or in the Public-Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act of 2002.

12. Confidential proprietary information or trade secrets, not publicly available, provided by a private person or entity to the Virginia Resources Authority or to a fund administered in connection with financial assistance rendered or to be rendered by the Virginia Resources Authority where, if such information were made public, the financial interest of the private person or entity would be adversely affected, and, after June 30, 1997, where such information was provided pursuant to a promise of confidentiality.

13. Confidential proprietary records that are provided by a franchisee under Article 1.2 (§ 15.2-2108.19 et seq.) of Chapter 21 of Title 15.2 to its franchising authority pursuant to a promise of confidentiality from the franchising authority that relates to the franchisee's potential provision of new services, adoption of new technologies or implementation of improvements, where such new services, technologies or improvements have not been implemented by the franchisee on a nonexperimental scale in the franchise area, and where, if such records were made public, the competitive advantage or financial interests of the franchisee would be adversely affected. In order for confidential proprietary information to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the franchisee shall (i) invoke such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought, (ii) identify the data or other materials for which protection is sought, and (iii) state the reason why protection is necessary.

14. Documents and other information of a proprietary nature furnished by a supplier of charitable gaming supplies to the Department of Charitable Gaming pursuant to subsection E of § 18.2-340.34.

15. Records and reports related to Virginia apple producer sales provided to the Virginia State Apple Board pursuant to §§ 3.1-622 and 3.1-624.

16. Trade secrets, as defined in the Uniform Trade Secrets Act (§ 59.1-336 et seq.) of Title 59.1, submitted by CMRS providers as defined in § 56-484.12 to the Wireless Carrier E-911 Cost Recovery

Subcommittee created pursuant to § 56-484.15, relating to the provision of wireless E-911 service.

17. Records submitted as a grant application, or accompanying a grant application, to the Commonwealth Health Research Board pursuant to Chapter 22 (§ 23-277 et seq.) of Title 23 to the extent such records contain proprietary business or research-related information produced or collected by the applicant in the conduct of or as a result of study or research on medical, rehabilitative, scientific, technical, or scholarly issues, when such information has not been publicly released, published, copyrighted, or patented, if the disclosure of such information would be harmful to the competitive position of the applicant.

18. Confidential proprietary records and trade secrets developed and held by a local public body (i) providing telecommunication services pursuant to § 56-265.4:4 and (ii) providing cable television services pursuant to Article 1.1 (§ 15.2-2108.2 et seq.) of Chapter 21 of Title 15.2, to the extent that disclosure of such records would be harmful to the competitive position of the locality. In order for confidential proprietary information or trade secrets to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the locality in writing shall (i) invoke the protections of this subdivision, (ii) identify with specificity the records or portions thereof for which protection is sought, and (iii) state the reasons why protection is necessary.

19. Confidential proprietary records and trade secrets developed by or for a local authority created in accordance with the Virginia Wireless Service Authorities Act (§ 15.2-5431.1 et seq.) to provide qualifying communications services as authorized by Article 5.1 (§ 56-484.7:1 et seq.) of Chapter 15 of Title 56, where disclosure of such information would be harmful to the competitive position of the authority, except that records required to be maintained in accordance with § 15.2-2160 shall be released.

20. Trade secrets as defined in the Uniform Trade Secrets Act (§ 59.1-336 et seq.) or financial records of a business, including balance sheets and financial statements, that are not generally available to the public through regulatory disclosure or otherwise, provided to the Department of Minority Business Enterprise as part of an application for (i) certification as a small, women- or minority-owned business in accordance with Chapter 14 (§ 2.2-1400 et seq.) of this title or (ii) a claim made by a disadvantaged business or an economically disadvantaged individual against the Capital Access Fund for Disadvantaged Businesses created pursuant to § 2.2-2311. In order for such trade secrets or financial records to be excluded from the provisions of this chapter, the business shall (a) invoke such exclusion upon submission of the data or other materials for which protection from disclosure is sought, (b) identify the data or other materials for which protection is sought, and (c) state the reasons why protection is necessary.

21. *Documents and other information of a proprietary or confidential nature disclosed by a carrier to the State Health Commissioner pursuant to § 32.1-276.5:1.*

§ 32.1-276.5:1. Disclosures of contractual arrangements to be made publicly available.

A. In order to advance transparency in health care and provide patients and families with better information on which to judge value among their treatment options, the Commissioner shall negotiate and contract with a nonprofit organization authorized under § 32.1-276.4 for an annual survey of carriers offering private group health insurance policies, which are subject to HEDIS reporting, to determine the reimbursement that is paid for a minimum of 25 most frequently reported health care services which may include inpatient and outpatient diagnostic services, surgical services or the treatment of certain conditions or diseases. Each carrier shall report the average reimbursement paid for a specific service from all providers and provider types, to include hospitals, outpatient or ambulatory surgery centers and physician offices. The survey shall also include, when available, the average reimbursement rates for the same services provided for reimbursement by fee-for-service Medicare and Medicaid. The survey shall be managed by the Commissioner to insure that when such information is reported it will provide the aggregate information so that readers will be able to determine the average amount of reimbursement paid for specific healthcare services. No provider, facility or carrier specific reimbursement information shall be included in the public survey reports. Such specific information shall be deemed proprietary and shall not be disclosed to the public; only the Commissioner will have access to the underlying survey data. The public survey reports shall be made available to the public through an Internet Website operated by the contracting organization.

The Commissioner, in conjunction with stakeholders working through the non-profit organization, shall work to (i) incorporate existing service quality data and guidance to the price information to further assist informed consumer choice to the extent it is practical and consistent with generally accepted national guidelines, and (ii) seek over time to display price and quality information for episodes of care in a manner which is consistent with generally accepted national guidelines.

B. The information acquired in the survey and provided to the Commissioner shall be confidential and shall be excluded from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq.) pursuant to subdivision 21 of § 2.2-3705.6.