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No. 2010/050

October 11, 2010

TO COUNTY ASSESSORS:

HOME ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY – PUBLIC OFFICIALS LIST

The Governor recently signed into law Assembly Bill 1813 (Stats. 2010, ch. 194) which further restricts information that can be posted on the Internet, expands the definition of public safety officer, and includes within that definition retired members of specified employee classifications. Existing Government Code section 6254.21, subdivisions (a) and (f)(13) prohibit any state or local agency from posting on the Internet the home address or telephone number of any public safety official without first obtaining the written permission of that individual.¹ A "public safety official" is defined in Government Code section 6254.24.

Effective January 1, 2011, AB 1813 amends sections 6254.21 and 6254.24 as follows:

- Section 6254.21(D)(i) extends this prohibition to include information provided to cellular telephone applications;
- Section 6254.24 broadens the entire list of "public safety officials" to include active or retired individuals;
- Section 6254.24(a) expands the definition of "peace officer" to include a person who is not a peace officer but may exercise the powers of arrest during the course and within the scope of their employment pursuant to section 830.7 of the Penal Code.

These Government Code sections restrict information posted on the Internet or provided to cellular telephone applications. They do not apply to the copy of the assessment roll that is located in an assessor's office or accessible through computer terminals located in county offices, nor do they affect the contents of the assessment roll. Revenue and Taxation Code section 602 specifies the contents of the assessment roll, and Revenue and Taxation Code section 408 requires that certain information be identified on the assessment roll.

These code sections also do not affect the sale of the assessment roll to companies that collect data. Other subparagraphs of Government Code section 6254.21 place restrictions on individuals and businesses from posting certain information on the Internet.

¹ See Letter To Assessors 2006/048.

Enclosed is a copy of Government Code sections 6254.21 and 6254.24 in strike-out and underline format for your information. If you have any questions, please contact our Assessment Services Unit at 916-445-4982.

Sincerely,

/s/ David J. Gau

David J. Gau
Deputy Director
Property and Special Taxes Department

DJG:mpm
Enclosure

Government Code Section 6254.21 as amended by Stats. 2010, ch. 194

SECTION 1. Section 6254.21 of the Government Code is amended to read:

6254.21. (a) No state or local agency shall post the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official on the Internet without first obtaining the written permission of that individual.

(b) No person shall knowingly post the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official, or of the official's residing spouse or child, on the Internet knowing that person is an elected or appointed official and intending to cause imminent great bodily harm that is likely to occur or threatening to cause imminent great bodily harm to that individual. A violation of this subdivision is a misdemeanor. A violation of this subdivision that leads to the bodily injury of the official, or his or her residing spouse or child, is a misdemeanor or a felony.

(c) (1) (A) No person, business, or association shall publicly post or publicly display on the Internet the home address or telephone number of any elected or appointed official if that official has made a written demand of that person, business, or association to not disclose his or her home address or telephone number.

(B) A written demand made under this paragraph by a state constitutional officer, a mayor, or a Member of the Legislature, a city council, or a board of supervisors shall include a statement describing a threat or fear for the safety of that official or of any person residing at the official's home address.

(C) A written demand made under this paragraph by an elected official shall be effective for four years, regardless of whether or not the official's term has expired prior to the end of the four-year period.

(D) (i) A person, business, or association that receives the written demand of an elected or appointed official pursuant to this paragraph shall remove the official's home address or telephone number from public display on the Internet, including information provided to cellular telephone applications, within 48 hours of delivery of the written demand, and shall continue to ensure that this information is not reposted on the same Internet Web site, subsidiary site, or any other Internet Web site maintained by the recipient of the written demand.

(ii) After receiving the elected or appointed official's written demand, the person, business, or association shall not transfer the appointed or elected official's home address or telephone number to any other person, business, or association through any other medium.

(iii) Clause (ii) shall not be deemed to prohibit a telephone corporation, as defined in Section 234 of the Public Utilities Code, or its affiliate, from transferring the elected or appointed official's home address or telephone number to any person, business, or association, if the transfer is authorized by federal or state law, regulation, order, or tariff, or necessary in the event of an emergency, or to collect a debt owed by the elected or appointed official to the telephone corporation or its affiliate.

(E) For purposes of this paragraph, "publicly post" or "publicly display" means to intentionally communicate or otherwise make available to the general public.

(2) An official whose home address or telephone number is made public as a result of a violation of paragraph (1) may bring an action seeking injunctive or declarative relief in any court of competent jurisdiction. If a court finds that a violation has occurred, it may grant injunctive or

declarative relief and shall award the official court costs and reasonable attorney's fees. A fine not exceeding one thousand dollars (\$1,000) may be imposed for a violation of the court's order for an injunction or declarative relief obtained pursuant to this paragraph.

(3) An elected or appointed official may designate in writing the official's employer, a related governmental entity, or any voluntary professional association of similar officials to act, on behalf of that official, as that official's agent with regard to making a written demand pursuant to this section. A written demand made by an agent pursuant to this paragraph shall include a statement describing a threat or fear for the safety of that official or of any person residing at the official's home address.

(d) (1) No person, business, or association shall solicit, sell, or trade on the Internet the home address or telephone number of an elected or appointed official with the intent to cause imminent great bodily harm to the official or to any person residing at the official's home address.

(2) Notwithstanding any other law, an official whose home address or telephone number is solicited, sold, or traded in violation of paragraph (1) may bring an action in any court of competent jurisdiction. If a jury or court finds that a violation has occurred, it shall award damages to that official in an amount up to a maximum of three times the actual damages but in no case less than four thousand dollars (\$4,000).

(e) An interactive computer service or access software provider, as defined in Section 230(f) of Title 47 of the United States Code, shall not be liable under this section unless the service or provider intends to abet or cause imminent great bodily harm that is likely to occur or threatens to cause imminent great bodily harm to an elected or appointed official.

(f) For purposes of this section, "elected or appointed official" includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(1) State constitutional officers.

(2) Members of the Legislature.

(3) Judges and court commissioners.

(4) District attorneys.

(5) Public defenders.

(6) Members of a city council.

(7) Members of a board of supervisors.

(8) Appointees of the Governor.

(9) Appointees of the Legislature.

(10) Mayors.

(11) City attorneys.

(12) Police chiefs and sheriffs.

(13) A public safety official, as defined in Section 6254.24. ~~For purposes of this section, a public safety official also means an active or retired peace officer as defined in Sections 830.2 to 830.7, inclusive, of the Penal Code.~~

(14) State administrative law judges.

(15) Federal judges and federal defenders.

(16) Members of the United States Congress and appointees of the President.

(g) Nothing in this section is intended to preclude punishment instead under Sections 69, 76, or 422 of the Penal Code, or any other provision of law.

~~SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.~~

Government Code Section 6254.24 as amended by Stats. 2010, ch. 194:

SEC. 2. Section 6254.24 of the Government Code is amended to read:

6254.24. As used in this chapter, "public safety official" means the following parties, whether active or retired:

(a) ~~An active or retired~~ A peace officer as defined in Sections 830 and 830.1 to 830.65, inclusive, of the Penal Code, or a person who is not a peace officer, but may exercise the powers of arrest during the course and within the scope of their employment pursuant to Section 830.7 of the Penal Code.

(b) ~~An active or retired~~ A public officer or other person listed in Sections 1808.2 and 1808.6 of the Vehicle Code.

(c) An "elected or appointed official" as defined in subdivision (f) of Section 6254.21.

(d) An attorney employed by the Department of Justice, the State Public Defender, or a county office of the district attorney or public defender, the United States Attorney, or the Federal Public Defender.

(e) A city attorney and an attorney who represent cities in criminal matters.

(f) ~~A specified~~ An employee of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation who supervises inmates or is required to have a prisoner in his or her care or custody.

(g) A sworn or nonsworn employee who supervises inmates in a city police department, a county sheriff's office, the Department of the California Highway Patrol, federal, state, or a local detention facility, and a local juvenile hall, camp, ranch, or home, and a probation officer as defined in Section 830.5 of the Penal Code.

(h) A federal prosecutor, a federal criminal investigator, and a National Park Service Ranger working in California.

(i) The surviving spouse or child of a peace officer defined in Section 830 of the Penal Code, if the peace officer died in the line of duty.

(j) State and federal judges and court commissioners.

(k) An employee of the Attorney General, a district attorney, or a public defender who submits verification from the Attorney General, district attorney, or public defender that the employee represents the Attorney General, district attorney, or public defender in matters that routinely place that employee in personal contact with persons under investigation for, charged with, or convicted of, committing criminal acts.

(l) A nonsworn employee of the Department of Justice or a police department or sheriff's office that, in the course of his or her employment, is responsible for collecting, documenting, and preserving physical evidence at crime scenes, testifying in court as an expert witness, and other technical duties, and a nonsworn employee that, in the course of his or her employment, performs a variety of standardized and advanced laboratory procedures in the examination of physical crime evidence, determines their results, and provides expert testimony in court.

~~SEC. 2. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution because the only costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district will be incurred because this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution.~~

SEC. 3. No reimbursement is required by this act pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution for certain costs that may be incurred by a local agency or school district because, in that regard, this act creates a new crime or infraction, eliminates a crime or infraction, or changes the penalty for a crime or infraction, within the meaning of Section 17556 of the Government Code, or changes the definition of a crime within the meaning of Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution. However, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains other costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.