

Corporations Are Persons Too – But Lack Personal Privacy Rights

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The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on March 1 that corporations do not have the same personal privacy rights as human beings. In *Federal Communications Commission v. AT&T*, the telecommunications company unsuccessfully asked the high court to exempt from public release certain potentially embarrassing e-mails and documents the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”) had obtained during a 2004 investigation into AT&T’s self-reported overcharges.

Writing for a unanimous Court (Justice Kagan not participating), Chief Justice Roberts rejected AT&T’s contention that the FCC should withhold production of the e-mails and documents sought as part of a Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”) request by some of AT&T’s competitors. AT&T had contended the Court should apply an exemption to FOIA for records that “could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.” Read more ...