Professor Linzer was interviewed by KUHF about the Supreme Court decision in FCC v AT&T, which makes it impossible for corporations to claim personal privacy to shield documents from Federal Freedom of Information Act requests.


KUHF Business News

**FCC vs AT&T**

by: Andrew Schneider

The Supreme Court has ruled yesterday that corporations cannot claim personal privacy to shield documents from Federal Freedom of Information Act requests. Andrew Schneider has the story.

The high court ruled eight-to-zero against AT&T and in favor of the Federal Communications Commission. The telecommunications firm was claiming a right to privacy to block its competitors from using the Freedom of Information Act to obtain information it had handed over to the FCC. Peter Linzer, professor of law at the University of Houston Law Center,

"The corporation argued that corporations are frequently described as persons. Chief Justice Roberts really gave them the back of his hand on that argument."

Linzer says the ruling is likely to encourage businesses to make greater use of information the federal government collects from their competitors. But the decision isn’t likely to signal a shift in direction by the high court on the broader issue of corporate rights versus federal authority.

"The conservative majority has tended to be quite protective of corporate free speech rights."

The most famous recent example is that of Citizens United versus the Federal Election Commission. In that case, the court ruled 5-to-4 that campaign finance restrictions violated corporations’ freedom of speech.