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MEDIA CONTACT
Gail Norris
202-296-6650
gnorris@comptel.org

COMPTEL Wins Unanimous Supreme Court Decision on Corporate Personal Privacy Rights

WASHINGTON, D.C. – COMPTEL, the leading trade association for the competitive communications industry, today issued a statement today after the U.S. Supreme Court, in an 8-0 vote, refused to extend personal privacy rights to corporations under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The case – FCC v. AT&T – stemmed from a FOIA request filed by COMPTEL in 2005 seeking records from the FCC relating to an investigation into AT&T’s participation in the E-Rate program. The core issue of the case, which overturned a federal appeals court decision, centered around whether corporations could assert personal privacy interests to prevent the government from releasing documents about them.

The following statement can be attributed to Mary Albert, COMPTEL’s assistant general counsel:

“COMPTEL is thrilled with the Supreme Court’s unanimous decision vacating the Third Circuit’s holding that documents may be withheld under the FOIA to protect the personal privacy of corporations. The Court has reaffirmed the important principle that FOIA authorizes liberal disclosure of government records and that the exemptions must be narrowly construed. COMPTEL filed its FOIA request six years ago and is looking forward to finally being able to review the requested records.”

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About COMPTEL
Based in Washington, D.C., COMPTEL is the leading industry association representing competitive communications service providers and their supplier partners. COMPTEL members are entrepreneurial companies driving technological innovation and creating economic growth through competitive voice, video, and data offerings and the development and deployment of next-generation, IP-based networks and services. COMPTEL advances its members’ interests through trade shows, networking, education, and policy advocacy before Congress, the Federal Communications Commission and the courts. COMPTEL works to ensure that competitive communications providers can continue to offer lower prices, better service, and greater innovation to consumers. For more information, visit www.comptel.org.