

# THE UNITED STATES OF AT&T

Back in June, the Bush Administration invited one of AT&T's key lobbyists, Ed Gillespie, to serve as White House counselor. A few weeks after that, BushCo expanded AT&T's resident lobbyist's role to include most of Karl Rove's portfolio. Just days after Gillespie took over that role, the DOJ made an unusual intervention into the FCC's request for comments on Net Neutrality, weighing against Net Neutrality.

Well today, one of AT&T's former key attorneys, Peter Keisler, just took over the Department of Justice.

In the late 1990s, Keisler represented AT&T before SCOTUS in a case divvying up authority over how the 1996 Telecom Act would be implemented. He represented AT&T and other telecom companies fighting local ordinances limiting the acts of telecommunication companies.

In early 2001, Keisler helped AT&T win the dismissal of a lawsuit that charged AT&T had illegally shared private information (a customer's unlisted phone number) with AT&T's credit division. The Second Circuit ruled that transfer of such personal information does not incur damages, and therefore private citizens cannot sue.

In June 2006, Keisler was one of a number of government lawyers arguing that New Jersey had no legal authority to subpoena documents relating to AT&T's and other telecomm companies' participation in the warrantless wiretapping program. Also in June 2006, Keisler invoked state secrets in *Hepting v. AT&T*, an attempt to scuttle the citizen lawsuits on the warrantless wiretap program.

In other words, both in and out of government, Keisler has represented AT&T's interests masterfully.