**SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES**

Privacy *v.* Security

No.—399-2364 Argued June 6, 2014—Decided June 6, 2014

Privacy is as vital an element of our pursuit of happiness as words are to a book. Our forefathers created the Constitution to defend our country from the wrongs it suffered at the hands of the British. Included in this Constitution was the Bill of Rights, a document that includes amendments that protect our basic rights as American citizens. The fourth amendment of this Bill prevents the citizens’ “persons, houses, papers, and effects” from being subject to unreasonable searches and seizures. Now that we live in an age of technology, questions have arisen about the application of this amendment to our rights in cyberspace. Can the government track individuals, read texts, and listen to calls without obtaining the warrants they would use in a physical search? It has come to our attention as Justices of the United States’ Supreme Court that this question must be answered in a rational manner based on the expectation of privacy and the fairness of the implemented method of search.

One of the concerns that has been brought to our attention is the use of GPS location data from cell phones to track individuals’ locations. We have concluded as a unified group that it is acceptable for law enforcement to utilize this tactic without a warrant. When a citizen is out in public with his or her phone, he or she does not have the right to expect privacy. Location data may also be toggled on or off, thus preventing any such tracking. People can also choose whether or not they buy and possess a phone with such technology installed. However, law enforcement should only use this method in criminal investigations.

In recent events, questions regarding the use of drones for domestic surveillance have surfaced. Our group has unanimously decided that drone-usage should not be employed without the proper warrants. Law enforcement is permitted to fly over private properties without full clearance, but they are not allowed to use sophisticated technology like thermal imaging. Drones are equipped with high resolution cameras with the ability to zoom as well as with thermal capabilities. Even if officials say they will not use the added technology, the temptation will be hard to resist. However, if the proper warrants are obtained, the appropriate use of drones will follow the guidelines of the Fourth Amendment.

The American public expects to be safeguarded by the government, not inhibited by it. The Fourth Amendment protects our right of owning property and keeping it private, and this is important because of our country’s dedication to preserving freedom. The lines of the physical world and cyberspace are blurred, and you cannot just shut a door on your cell phone to have privacy. We must define the boundaries that our security officials will abide by in order to best serve and protect the American people as people, not as numbers.