

THE NEWOLD USAS

Amanda marks the expiration of the PATRIOT Act appointees as USA.

These 11 prosecutors now “find themselves at the mercy of the same U.S. district courts that the Justice Department saw fit to cut out of the U.S. Attorney appointment process last year.” The courts today will decide whether to reappoint these prosecutors who were handpicked by Gonzales and the White House.

Many judges and former U.S. attorneys believe that the federal courts today will be “less inclined than they have been in the past to rubber-stamping the attorney general’s interim picks.”

She’s following some of the same USAs as I am:

Jeff Taylor, DC. It’d be awfully nice to ensure that the USA overseeing DC would be willing to take a criminal referral from Congress or the DOJ IG. You know—just in case someone was held in contempt by Congress? But I’m not sure Taylor would do that. Unfortunately, the DC judges seem to like him anyway.

Early next month, a committee of active judges at the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will meet to discuss Taylor’s appointment, according to a spokesman for Chief Judge Thomas Hogan. The last time the judges convened for a U.S. Attorney appointment was in September 2004, when they extended Kenneth Wainstein’s stay. Wainstein moved to the Justice Department’s National Security Division in September 2006, and Taylor was appointed to replace him. He, too, is expected to win the court’s OK, though Taylor’s nomination has languished in Congress for months.

"Mr. Taylor's leadership has rendered a very positive effect on morale," U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina says. "He has a reputation for being fair-minded and progressive."

So we're apt to be stuck with Taylor, who has little legitimacy, IMO.

Nelson Cohen, AK. Here's where Amanda and I differ. Cohen was appointed to the detriment of Ted Stevens' and Lisa Murkowski's picks. You know, Ted Stevens, who is waiting patiently as the FBI investigates his every move? Personally, I'm surprised and relieved that AGAG's DOJ appointed someone who would actually allow this investigation to proceed. But that appears to be what happened. The question is, can Stevens get to his home state judges to try to change this?

For me, that leaves two more USAs of interest. Matt Dummermuth, and George Cardona. You see, if there is a remaining USA who was fired we don't know about it, it was in IA. Which would mean Dummermuth was more palatable than his predecessors.

And George Cardona? He's the guy that AGAG spent a last minute appointment on—in the district that would prosecute Jerry Lewis, if things ever came to that. **[Update from dday: Very cool—Cardona is gone. I hadn't realized that when Lewis' staffer got subpoenaed the other day.]** Those are, IMO, the two fishiest of the USAs appointed under PATRIOT. I'm curious to see what becomes of them...