

The US Attorney who arranged the plea agreement for Chiquita, Jeffery A. Taylor, had been sworn in just six months earlier, in September 2006, under a controversial provision of the Patriot Act which enabled him to hold that position until May of this year without ever being confirmed by the Senate.

Prior to that appointment, Taylor served in the Justice Department as a counselor to Attorney Generals John Ashcroft and Alberto Gonzales. In early 2006, he participated in discussions of the forthcoming attorney firings with Kyle Sampson, who was the chief coordinator of the firings and whose resignation Mar. 12, 2007 marked a major turning point in the scandal.

In 2005, Sampson had laid out the ideal of the type of Bush loyalist the administration wanted to have serving as US Attorneys, a profile which Taylor fit. Sampson proposed him in early 2006 to replace soon-to-be-fired Carol Lam as US Attorney in San Diego, but prior to Lam's actual firing Taylor was appointed as US Attorney for Washington, DC.

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