



January 6, 2017

U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Submitted electronically: Manuel_Contreras@help.senate.gov

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions:

This is submitted on behalf of The Institute for Science and Human Values, a tax-exempt non-profit organization that promotes the well-being of society, the guarantee of various rights, including those of women, racial, ethnic, and other minorities, and supports education, health care, gainful employment, and other social benefits.

We ask you to vote against the confirmation of Andrew Puzder as Secretary of Labor because we do not believe that Mr. Puzder will adequately discharge the primary duty of that post, which is to protect the rights of workers. Grounds for that belief are based on his anti-employee public record.

As CEO of CKE Restaurants, his businesses have repeatedly violated the Fair Labor Standards Act, the chief statute which he would be charged with enforcing as Labor Secretary. The Department of Labor has investigated Mr. Puzder's restaurants often during his 16 years tenure in that position, and has found violations of wage and hour laws in most of those investigations. He has been an outspoken critic of the very overtime and minimum wage rules which guarantee employees a living wage.

Mr. Puzder has benefited greatly from the underpayment of his employees. He earns almost 300 times what his low paid workers are paid. During his tenure as CEO, his restaurants stopped making contributions to 130 of his employees' 401(k) plans, while he enjoyed company-paid country club membership and the company airplane. But for his workers, he is against meal and rest breaks and sick leave.

His attitude toward women is another reason we oppose his confirmation. The ads for several of his restaurants feature scantily clad, busty women, and he is on record as stating his preference for "beautiful women eating burgers in bikinis". These are not the sentiments of a person who should be elevated to a Cabinet position.

Mr. Puzder's disdain for his workers is manifested by his comments regarding the replacement of human employees with machines that don't demand wages. His rationale for this preference is that machines are "always polite, they always upsell, they never take a vacation, they never show up late, there's never a slip-and-fall, or an age, sex, or race discrimination case."

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From his copious record comments and policies, Andrew Puzder has shown nothing but contempt for his workers. A Secretary of Labor must be an advocate for the employed; Andrew Puzder is not. For these reasons and many others, we ask that you vote against his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Toni Van Pelt, President and Public Policy Director

Marcia S. Cohen, Legal Counsel

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