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Puzder is the Wrong Person for the Job

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SMALL SCHOOL.
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Puzder is the wrong person for the job

The potential head of the Department of Labor has a long history of anti-worker policies

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ECONOMIC JUSTICE CLINIC

Donald Trump ascended to the presidency in part by vowing to fight for working people. Mr. Trump promised that, as president, he would promote policies that lead to economic growth and good, well-paying jobs. Nominating Andrew Puzder to head the Department of Labor is a betrayal of that promise.

The mission of the Department of Labor is “to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners of the United States, to improve their working conditions, and to advance their opportunities for profitable employment.” The department has been vital to protecting workers from exploitation and unsafe working conditions.

As the CEO of CKE Restaurants — the parent company of Carl’s Jr. and Hardee’s — Puzder’s track record suggests that he is fundamentally at odds with the mission of the department he has been tabbed to head.



Puzder has engaged in union busting and has opposed any meaningful increases to the minimum wage. His restaurants have been the source of numerous sexual harassment, discrimination, and wage and hour complaints. His company has been forced to pay tens of millions of dollars of wrongfully withheld wages and has faced numerous workplace safety investigations.

Puzder’s business model is to get rich on the backs of low-wage workers. In fact, he makes more money in a day than a

minimum-wage worker makes in a year. Recently, Puzder told Business Insider that he would be interested in replacing his own workers with robots, saying, “[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.”

Puzder is a shameful choice to head the Department of Labor. The person holding the position of labor secretary has tremendous responsibility to improve the lives of America’s workers. Now, more than ever, we need a labor secretary who will push for policies that reverse trends of declining wages and rising inequality. Andrew Puzder is the wrong person for the job, and his nomination should be opposed by all who care about the basic rights of working people in New Mexico and across the United States.

Note: The views expressed are those of the individual authors and not the UNM School of Law.