

Remarks at Forum on Nomination of Andrew Puzder for Secretary of Labor
Senator Patty Murray
Tuesday, January 10, 2017

“I want to start by saying how much I appreciate all of the witnesses who took time from their days and traveled for this forum.

“It is absolutely critical that your experiences and your voices be part of this process—and I know we’re all very grateful you’re here.

“Senator Warren, thank you for your leadership in bringing everyone together for such a valuable discussion.

“And Ms. Owens, thank you as always for your tireless advocacy and for sharing your expertise.

“Throughout his campaign, President-elect Trump told workers he would help them.

“But after meeting with his nominee for the Secretary of Labor, Andrew Puzder, and as we have learned more and more about his record, I’ve grown increasingly concerned that this choice by President-elect Trump represents yet another broken promise.

“On issue after issue, Andrew Puzder has made clear he will do what’s best for big businesses like his own—at the expense of workers and their families.

“Today, millions of workers are struggling to get by on just \$7.25 an hour—but Andrew Puzder has spoken out against a strong increase in the minimum wage.

“Only 8 percent of workers qualified for overtime 2015, compared with 60 percent in 1975—but Andrew Puzder has been one of the most vocal opponents of President Obama’s efforts to update the rules so that millions more workers can earn overtime pay.

“Puzder has even talked about replacing workers with robots, because 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.’

“Now, all of that makes a lot of sense coming from a millionaire CEO who profits off of squeezing workers, but it’s very concerning coming from a potential Secretary of Labor—someone who should be standing up for workers and making sure they get treated fairly, rather than nickel-and-dimed.

“And no one can speak more clearly to these questions than employees of the companies that Andrew Puzder led.

“Just this morning a survey came out that reinforced concerns about workers’ treatment at CKE—and I am very interested in hearing from our witnesses today about their experiences.

“Thank you all again for coming, and now I will ask a few questions.”