

‘Devout Catholic’ Is Latest Addition to Trump Cabinet

Thursday evening, President-elect Donald Trump announced he would nominate Andrew Puzder, CEO of CKE Restaurants, as Secretary of the Department of Labor.

“Andy Puzder has created and boosted the careers of thousands of Americans, and his extensive record fighting for workers makes him the ideal candidate to lead the Department of Labor,” Trump said. “Andy will fight to make American workers safer and more prosperous by enforcing fair occupational safety standards and ensuring workers receive the benefits they deserve, and he will save small businesses from the crushing burdens of unnecessary regulations that are stunting job growth and suppressing wages.”

Puzder, who has been identified as a “devout Catholic,” is frequently credited with turning CKE Restaurants—which includes Carl’s Jrs. and Hardee’s fast-food restaurants—into a profitable company. The son of a car salesman with a working-class upbringing in Cleveland, Ohio, he earned his way through college while continuing to support his family working construction, landscaping and house-painting jobs.

He earned a bachelor’s degree from Cleveland State University, becoming the first in his family to graduate from college, and a law degree at Washington University. After college, he was a trial lawyer in St. Louis, then became a corporate attorney with Fidelity National Financial.

“I am honored to be nominated by President-elect Trump for Secretary of Labor,” Puzder said. “I look forward to the opportunity to help President-elect Trump restore America’s global economic leadership.”

Puzder joined CKE Restaurants in 1997 as executive vice

president and general counsel for CKE Restaurants, and just three years later, he became CEO. With more than 3,750 franchise restaurants in the U.S., generating \$1.4 billion in annual revenue, the company now employs more than 75,000 people.

In 2010, he co-wrote the book *Job Creation: How It Really Works and Why Government Doesn't Understand It*, in which he helped provide a framework for instilling strong optimism among U.S. businesses that will create millions of new jobs.

"The President-elect believes, as do I, that the right government policies can result in more jobs and better wages for the American worker," Puzder said. "I'm proud to be offered the chance to serve in his administration."

Here's what his colleagues have to say about his appointment:

- Eric Williams, COO of CKE Restaurants: "I congratulate Andy Puzder on his nomination by President-elect Trump to serve our nation as Secretary of Labor. As someone who has worked with CKE for more than three decades—from a restaurant crew member, to my current position as COO—I have personally witnessed the leadership Andy has demonstrated since he became CEO in 2000. He has always led CKE as an entrepreneurial company, maintaining a focus on hard work and motivation instead of bureaucracy and red tape. Andy is someone who understands workers, their motivation and what employees need in terms of job fulfillment and opportunities. Andy's leadership has provided growth opportunities for employees throughout our entire organization, and I know he will be steadfast in promoting the welfare and success of all hard-working American citizens in this new role."
- Troi Martin Wierdsma, Carl's Jr. Owner: "Andy Puzder's nomination as Secretary of Labor has given me even more faith in President-elect Trump's commitment to leading America back to prosperity. I have seen numerous

positive character traits in Andy while working with him at Carl's Jr. as a restaurant owner and franchisee for the past 13 years: he is solid on his word, sincere in his approach and very driven to overcome whatever challenges may come his way. He sincerely cares as much about our cashiers as he does about the restaurant owners. His foresight, vision and desire for fairness will help make nationwide economic prosperity an achievable destination. His work ethic has been an inspiration to all of us who have worked alongside him, and it has been a pleasure to learn from the best of the best. I know he is going to do an outstanding job as President-elect Trump's Secretary of Labor."

- Robert Cresanti, President and CEO of the International Franchise Association: "Andy is an exceptional choice to lead the Labor Department due to his business experience and policy acumen on so many issues impacting employers and employees in today's economy. Andy would also be able to champion how the franchise business model, which generates a higher percentage of new jobs in the economy than non-franchises, is a key part of the solution to wage growth and upward mobility that so many voters are looking for out of policymakers in Washington."
- Alfredo Ortiz, President, Job Creators Network: "Mr. Puzder would provide welcome relief for the small business community that has had to endure years of regulatory assault. He is someone who deeply understands the regulatory burden facing job creators because it is one that he lives with every day running two of the nation's most popular restaurant franchises." {eoa}