

President Trump's Labor Secretary Nominee Withdraws

President Donald Trump's nominee for labor secretary, Andrew Puzder, announced his withdrawal on Wednesday afternoon after several Republicans in the Senate said they were withholding their support for the embattled fast food CEO.

In a statement released by the White House, Puzder said:

After careful consideration and discussions with my family, I am withdrawing my nomination for secretary of labor. I am honored to have been considered by President Donald Trump to lead the Department of Labor and put America's workers and businesses back on a path to sustainable prosperity.

I want thank President Trump for his nomination. I also thank my family and my many supporters—employees, businesses, friends and people who have voiced their praise and hopeful optimism for the policies and new thinking I would have brought to America as secretary of labor. While I won't be serving in the administration, I fully support the president and his highly qualified team.

According to *The Washington Post*, which broke the story, at least 12 Republicans were holding off on supporting Puzder's nomination. Asked directly, a number of senators said they wanted to "wait and see" how he responded to questions during his confirmation hearing, which had been delayed, but was expected to begin Thursday.

According to several reports, Democrats planned to slam him with many of the same misogynist smear attacks they used against the president during the 2016 election. They also planned to rehash allegations made 30 years ago during his divorce that he had been physically abusive to his ex-wife—a claim she has since recanted.

Additionally, there were reports that he had previously hired an illegal as a housekeeper—typically a poison dart to any nomination that requires Senate confirmation—and he had interned with a mob lawyer early in his career.

As of this writing, there is no clear-cut front-runner to replace Puzder as labor secretary. The CKE Restaurants CEO had been Trump's first and only real choice for the job, although there had been hints he might also interview Victoria Lipnic, a member of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and former Labor Department official during the George W. Bush administration. {eoa}