

Corporate Cabinet Profile Series



Nominee: Andy Puzder

Cabinet Title: Labor Secretary

Current or immediate former title: President and CEO of CKE Restaurants

Corporate Connection: CKE Restaurants, Carl's Jr., Hardee's

Andy Puzder has for more than 16 years been the president and CEO of CKE Restaurants, parent company of fast-food chains Hardee's and Carl's Jr.¹ Critics charge the company -- which has faced legal action for firing workers for labor organizing activity -- with fostering an anti-worker, anti-union atmosphere.² CKE currently operates more than 3,300 restaurants in 42 states and in 28 countries.³ Puzder, a major GOP donor, has been an outspoken critic of the Obama administration's Labor Department policies.⁴

- Restaurants affiliated with CKE have been investigated by the U.S. Department of Labor. At least one franchise-owned restaurant is currently under investigation.⁵
- 108 investigations at CKE-affiliated restaurants dating back to 2004 resulted in the businesses agreeing to pay \$153,921 in back wages for 936 employees, mostly from minimum wage and overtime violations.⁶
- Puzder has praised automating jobs, saying of the machines that replace workers, "They're 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."⁷
- He opposed the Obama administration proposal to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10.⁸
- Responding to criticism that Carl's Jr. ads objectify women, Puzder said, "I like our ads. I like beautiful women eating burgers in bikinis. I think it's very American."⁹
- Puzder authored a Forbes op-ed criticizing the Obama Labor Department's overtime rule, which would raise the threshold for salaried workers to qualify for overtime pay.¹⁰
- Puzder participated in a U.S. Chamber of Commerce panel criticizing the Obama administration's policy that would allow franchise owners to be held liable for franchisee misconduct.¹¹

¹ http://www.ckr.com/about_management.html#puzder

² <https://thinkprogress.org/puzder-labor-abuses-f235d772bc8c#.fnyvunaw5>

³ <http://www.ckr.com/about.html>

⁴ <http://www.nationallawjournal.com/id=1202774230705/Fastfood-CEO-and-Regulation-Foe-Andrew-Puzder-Is-Trump-Pick-for-DOL-Chief?mcode=0&curindex=0&curpage=ALL>

⁵ <https://www.bna.com/burger-executive-labor-n73014448061/>

⁶ <https://www.bna.com/burger-executive-labor-n73014448061/>

⁷ <http://www.businessinsider.com/carls-jr-wants-open-automated-location-2016-3>

⁸ <http://www.wsj.com/articles/andy-puzder-minimum-wage-maximum-politics-1412543682>

⁹ <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/246487>

¹⁰ <http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2016/05/18/the-harsh-reality-of-regulating-overtime-pay/#18aca2882321>

¹¹ <http://www.franchiseactionnetwork.com/blog/us-chamber-commerce-hosts-event-joint-employer-issue>



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- Prior to becoming CKE's CEO, Puzder was the executive vice president and general council of Fidelity National.¹²
- Puzder has made more than \$20,000 in campaign contributions to Donald Trump and his allies, and has given more than \$1.3 million to Republican candidates and campaigns since 1990.¹³
- His net worth is undisclosed, but reports suggest it reaches into the tens of millions of dollars.¹⁴

¹² http://www.ckr.com/about_management.html#puzder

¹³ <https://www.opensecrets.org/trump>

¹⁴ <https://mic.com/articles/161681/andrew-puzder-net-worth-here-s-what-we-know-about-the-millionaire-ceo-of-cke-restaurants#.L8y5NUWxX>