

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Guy Molyneux and Mark Bunge, Hart Research Associates
DATE: February 14, 2017
RE: Findings of Maine Voter Survey on Puzder Nomination

Hart Research conducted a survey of 400 registered voters in Maine regarding the nomination of Andrew Puzder as secretary of labor. The survey was conducted by phone on February 11 and 12, 2017, and the margin of error for results is ± 4.9 percentage points. This memo reviews the survey's main findings.

1) Maine voters say that Andrew Puzder does not have the right background to serve as secretary of labor.

We first asked Mainers whether Andrew Puzder, the CEO of CKE Restaurants, has the right background to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the US secretary of labor:

President Trump has nominated Andrew Puzder to be secretary of labor, with responsibility to run the US Department of Labor and enforce laws related to the minimum wage, overtime, workplace safety, harassment, and discrimination. Mr. Puzder is now the CEO of CKE Restaurants, the parent company of the fast food chains Hardee's and Carl's Junior. In your view, was Donald Trump right to pick a corporate CEO for secretary of labor, or should he have chosen someone with experience representing workers' interests?

By 24 points (54% to 30%), voters say that President Trump was not right to try to fill the labor secretary position with a corporate CEO, and should instead have nominated someone who represents the interests of workers. This is a broadly held sentiment, including among majorities of both Democrats (84% to 7%) and independents (56% to 22%); even 27% of Republicans think that it was not the right choice. Among supporters of Senator Susan Collins (defined as the 58% of voters who approve of her job performance), half (51%) say that Trump should not have chosen a corporate CEO for the job.

2) Maine voters are troubled by many elements of Mr. Puzder's record, seeing each as a reason for Maine's senators to oppose his confirmation.

Because Mr. Puzder is not a well-known public figure, the survey provided respondents with information about his background and relevant policy views. Mainers feel that two factors are valid reasons for senators to consider confirming Puzder: his pledge to reduce regulations on small businesses (49% say it is a reason to confirm, 30% a reason to oppose), and his experience running companies that employ 75,000 workers (44% to 20%).

However, voters identify many more reasons to oppose Puzder's confirmation as labor secretary. They are especially troubled by his restaurants' violations of the labor laws he would be called upon to enforce as labor secretary, his failure to pay employment taxes on an undocumented worker, his company's outsourcing of jobs, and the poverty-level wages paid by his restaurants. A large majority of Mainers say that their senators should oppose Puzder for each of the following reasons:

- Andrew Puzder's restaurants have been repeatedly cited for violations of the laws he would enforce as labor secretary, including more than 1,000 wage theft violations (68% say it is a reason to oppose).
- Andrew Puzder employed an undocumented immigrant as a housekeeper for five years and did not pay taxes he was legally required to pay (71%).
- Andrew Puzder outsourced American jobs, shipping his company's technology division to the Philippines (67%).
- Andrew Puzder's restaurants pay wages that leave many workers below the poverty line, forcing many to rely on public assistance, and costing taxpayers at least \$247 million per year (62%).
- Andrew Puzder started his career as a lawyer defending a client connected to organized crime who illegally borrowed \$25 million from a workers' pension fund and failed to pay it back (62%).
- Andrew Puzder opposes raising the federal minimum wage significantly above its current rate of \$7.25 an hour even though he was paid more than \$2,000 an hour in a recent year (58%).

In addition, fully 72% of Maine voters consider it to be a conflict of interest if Andrew Puzder were confirmed and then led a federal agency that is investigating his former companies, Carl's Junior and Hardee's restaurants, for wage theft.

3) Mainers deliver a clear verdict on Andrew Puzder: after learning about his background and record, they say by three to one that Maine's US senators should oppose his confirmation.

After learning about Mr. Puzder's qualifications, record, and positions on key labor issues, Maine voters do NOT believe he should be confirmed as the nation's secretary of labor. Just 22% want their US senators to support Puzder's confirmation, while an overwhelming majority (65%) want them to oppose it (including 57% who feel this way strongly). Nearly all groups of voters in the state oppose confirmation, including men and women, all age groups, and those in all areas of the state. Supporters of Senator Collins oppose his confirmation by 65% to 19%.

| Should Maine Senators Support or Oppose Confirmation of Andrew Puzder? | | |
|---|----------------|---------------|
| | <u>Support</u> | <u>Oppose</u> |
| | % | % |
| All voters | 22 | 65 |
| 18 to 39 | 22 | 66 |
| 40 to 59 | 26 | 60 |
| 60 and older | 19 | 68 |
| Men | 29 | 60 |
| Women | 16 | 70 |
| Portland area | 21 | 67 |
| Bangor/north | 25 | 61 |
| Trump voters | 50 | 25 |
| Clinton voters | 3 | 93 |
| Democrats | 4 | 93 |
| Independents | 14 | 77 |
| Republicans | 46 | 30 |
| Approve of Collins | 19 | 65 |
| Disapprove of Collins | 27 | 68 |

4) Finally, the data suggest that Senators King and Collins would be taking a political risk if they backed Puzder's confirmation.

Fully 54% of Maine voters say they would be less likely to support a senator for reelection if he or she voted to confirm Puzder, while just 19% say they would be more likely. An overwhelming proportion (85% less likely, 8% more likely) of Democrats say they would oppose this senator, and always-important independents say they would be less likely to support the senator by 60% to 10%. Even half (50% to 20%) of Senator Collins's supporters say that she would be less likely to earn their vote if she voted to confirm Andrew Puzder as secretary of labor.