



Freedom Network USA

Senate HELP Committee Members
VIA EMAIL

January 6, 2017

Re: Labor Secretary Nominee Andrew Puzder Confirmation Hearing Concerns and Questions from Anti-Trafficking Freedom Network USA

Dear Senators:

The Freedom Network USA (“FNUSA”), founded in 2001 following the enactment of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (“TVPA”), is comprised of 40 non-governmental organizations and 12 individuals that serve and/or advocate for justice and services to human trafficking victim-survivors. Our members are in 19 states and 33 cities and members work with an extensive network of non-member organizations in all 50 states. FNUSA integrates a human-rights based approach in all of our work with trafficking victim-survivors and our members work to ensure all survivors receive the full range of services they need to recover and thrive. Accordingly, FNUSA is uniquely qualified to speak to the real life challenges trafficked persons experience in the United States.

The 3Ps of prevention, protection, and prosecution form the cornerstones of the TVPA implementation and enforcement. The President elect’s nominee for Labor Secretary, Andrew Puzder, would have key responsibilities for the implementation of this multi-front approach to tackling the scourge of human trafficking and thwarting would-be traffickers who hope to profit from trafficking in the United States. Toward this end, we respectfully request that the following concerns and questions be posed to Mr. Puzder during his confirmation hearings:

1. Are you committed to the vigorous implementation of the TVPA including the prevention of human trafficking and holistic protection of victims-survivors?
2. The TVPA defines human trafficking to include both trafficking for labor and for commercial sex. Freedom Network USA members have identified and served US Citizen and foreign national survivors of both labor and sex trafficking, youths and adults. However, in the July 2016 TIP Report, the United States reports that the U.S. Department of Justice opened, during the covered fiscal year, 802 human trafficking cases and prosecuted successfully 257 cases nationwide, only 9 of which were labor trafficking cases. International statistical data indicates that approximately 68% of all human trafficking cases are labor trafficking. What will you do, as Labor Secretary, to increase the identification of labor trafficking in the US?

3. As demonstrated by the 2016 Ohio case in which children were forced to work on egg farms in Ohio (<https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/two-defendants-sentenced-role-forced-labor-scheme-exploited-guatemalan-minors-ohio-egg-farms>), we know that minors are especially vulnerable to trafficking. As Labor Secretary, what will you do to ensure the protection of America's youth, especially in rural, agricultural areas?

Thank you for your consideration of these questions. Please contact Jean Bruggeman at jean@freedomnetworkusa.org with any questions or for more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean Bruggeman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Jean Bruggeman
Executive Director
Freedom Network USA