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AFTER DELAY, HEARING ON TRUMP'S LABOR PICK ANDY PUZDER SET FOR FEB. 2

By Eric Morath
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Fast-food executive Andy Puzder, President-elect Donald Trump's pick for labor secretary, is set to have his confirmation hearing on Feb. 2.

The confirmation hearing for the chief executive of CKE Restaurants Holdings Inc., the parent company of the Carl's Jr. and Hardee's burger chains, was tentatively slated for this month, but was moved due to conflicts in lawmakers' calendars, according to Sen. Lamar Alexander's office. The Tennessee Republican is chairman of Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee overseeing Mr. Puzder's confirmation.

Mr. Puzder's nomination has faced criticism from Democrats and unions who argue he'll work to roll back worker protections. His supporters say Mr. Puzder will bring a strong record of job creation to the position.

"Mr. Puzder is a respected Tennessee business leader... I look forward to hearing from him about how we can work together create an environment to help create jobs for more Americans," Mr Alexander said in a statement Tuesday.

The lawyer-turned-executive has been a vocal opponent of fast-food workers seeking to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and has been critical of Obama administration rules that would make more workers eligible for overtime pay.

Mr. Puzder "has even talked about replacing workers with robots because robots don't need breaks or get sick," said Sen. Patty Murray of Washington, the committee's ranking Democrat. "All of that makes a lot of sense coming from a millionaire CEO who profits off of squeezing workers, but it's very concerning coming from a potential Secretary of Labor."

Mr. Puzder has declined interview requests since Mr. Trump tapped him for the position in early December. On Monday he tweeted, "I am looking forward to my hearing," after recent media reports suggested he was having second thoughts about the job. It was his first tweet in more than a month.