



March 29, 2017

US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions,

With his refusal in Committee testimony to offer even a single substantive opinion to questions about the role of the Department of Labor in the lives of working people, R. Alexander Acosta failed to demonstrate that he has the qualifications to become Labor Secretary.

Mr. Acosta's vapid responses to Senators on the HELP Committee created more questions than they answered. Does Mr. Acosta fully understand the mission of the Department of Labor? Is he committed to that mission?

Aside from questions regarding Mr. Acosta's philosophy on federal labor regulations, he refused to comment or take a stand on real-world examples the Department of Labor's service to working people. Even on the most basic occupational safety questions, Mr. Acosta dodged. When asked about silica dust regulations by Senator Elizabeth Warren, Mr. Acosta did not commit to enforcing them, potentially putting tens of thousands of lives at risk. Mr. Acosta also declined to comment on his policy opinions or his administrative approach to issues like paid overtime pay, wage theft, and general occupational safety.

What's more, Mr. Acosta confirmed that he'll be "Trump's man" in the Department of Labor. Given the president's deep demonstrated animus towards working people, this is very distressing.

For these reasons, Interfaith Worker Justice urges HELP Senators to oppose Mr. Acosta's nomination in Committee. Should Mr. Acosta's nomination move to the full Senate floor, we will continue to urge all Senators to vote against Mr. Acosta to lead the Department of Labor.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Barrett". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and "B".

Laura Barrett
Executive Director
Interfaith Worker Justice