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**ALLEGHENY COUNTY LABOR COUNCIL  
REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL  
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**The Trump Administration:  
A Time of Uncertainty and Concern for the Labor Movement**

Although the New Year is often a time for positive change, 2017 is unfortunately likely to bring a sea of very unwelcomed changes to the legal and regulatory landscape for the labor movement. Although Donald Trump made grand promises during his campaign for President that he would fight for American workers, it is already quite apparent that President-Elect Trump was peddling nothing but snake oil to American workers on the campaign trail.

Shortly after President-Elect Trump takes office, the composition of the five-member NLRB will switch from Democratic to Republican control. There are currently two vacancies on the NLRB that President-Elect Trump will be able to fill after he takes office. Once these vacancies are filled, the NLRB will have three Republican and two Democratic board members. In November 2017, NLRB General Counsel Richard Griffin, Jr.’s term will expire and he will likewise be replaced by a Republican. It is very likely that the new Republican-controlled NLRB will roll back much of the progress that has been made on workers’ rights at the NLRB over the past eight years.

Furthermore, President-Elect Trump has nominated Andy Puzder—a fast food CEO as Secretary of Labor. It is unlikely that Mr. Puzder will serve as a champion of workers’ rights at the Department of Labor given his publicly stated opposition to new regulations enhancing overtime protections for workers and increasing the minimum wage. Furthermore, his statements have demonstrated a



commitment to enhancing corporate profits by eliminating Department of Labor regulations that protect workers' rights.

While much of what is to come in 2017 is not favorable for organized labor, one small silver lining is that President Trump's candidacy has brought the disastrous effect of "free-trade" deals and the significant loss of manufacturing jobs into the mainstream of public discourse. Whether President-Elect Trump will actually make a positive impact on this area or not has yet to be seen. However, the time is ripe for organized labor to make a renewed push against disastrous "free trade" deals and to encourage our friends and family to help create jobs in America by purchasing products stamped with four important words: "Made in the USA."

While the next four years are likely to be a time of unwelcomed changes, it is worth noting that organized labor has always had to fight hard with blood, sweat, and tears to obtain legal and regulatory protections for workers. In fact, it is important to remember that at one time labor unions were considered illegal criminal conspiracies under the law and early labor leaders had to literally put their lives on the line to fight for the rights that workers have today. If organized labor was able to stand up and fight for workers in those dark days, surely organized labor can strike back hard against any attack on workers' rights in 2017. As always, we will keep the Allegheny County Labor Council updated as these issues progress.

Respectfully submitted,

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