The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions  
United States Senate  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions  
United States Senate  
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Oppose the Nomination of Patrick Pizzella to be Deputy Secretary of Labor

Dear Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray,

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition of approximately 200 national advocacy organizations, I am writing to express our opposition to the confirmation of Patrick Pizzella to serve as Deputy Secretary at the Department of Labor. We previously joined numerous civil rights, human rights, labor, and community organizations to raise concerns about Mr. Pizzella’s record, concerns that a hearing in July failed to address.

As we previously noted, Mr. Pizzella worked closely with Jack Abramoff to lobby for policies on the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands that essentially allowed for unchecked slave labor to be performed with the imprimatur of the “Made in the U.S.A.” label on goods and clothing. At his hearing, Mr. Pizzella repeatedly refused to offer straightforward answers to simple questions posed by Senators and provided no real assurances that he is committed to protecting the rights of workers.

Mr. Pizzella, if confirmed, would essentially be the Chief Operating Officer of the department tasked with protecting a wide range of core labor rights, including proper payment under the wage and hour laws, the civil rights of federal contract workers, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and more. Yet he has not done enough to repudiate his past record of defending companies that routinely ignored these rights, and he has not given workers adequate reason to believe that he will defend their rights in the future.

Based on Mr. Pizzella’s record and the little additional information obtained from his hearing, The Leadership Conference must oppose his confirmation. Thank you for your
consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Randhava, Senior Counsel, at (202) 466-3311.

Sincerely,

Vanita Gupta
President & CEO