

NATIONAL

Trump names Eugene Scalia as his pick for new Labor Secretary

AFL-CIO blasts the choice — a former Walmart lawyer and son of union nemesis Antonin Scalia

By Marc Gruenberg
Press Associates Inc.

WASHINGTON, D.C.— The national AFL-CIO is opposing GOP President Donald Trump's nomination of Eugene Scalia, the right-wing business lawyer and son of the late conservative Supreme Court justice, to be Secretary of Labor.

Trump nominated Scalia to the job in late July after prior Labor Secretary Alex Acosta

was forced to resign over revelations about the sweetheart deal he reached with serial sexual predator Jeffrey Epstein just over a decade ago. Acosta was U.S. attorney for Southern Florida (Miami and surroundings) then.

Scalia served briefly in the George W. Bush administration as Solicitor of Labor, the department's top legal job. But he was so controversial even then that the Senate Labor Committee never called his permanent nomination up for a vote.

"Eugene Scalia has spent his entire career making life more difficult and dangerous for working people. We opposed him in 2002 for solicitor of labor based on his anti-worker record, and his disdain for working people has worsened, not improved," AFL-CIO

President Richard Trumka said on July 26.

"Scalia has fought ergonomics standards, threatened to destroy workers' retirement savings, challenged the expansion of health care and dismissed repetitive injuries as 'junk science.' His extreme views are in direct conflict with what America deserves from a Secretary of Labor."

"The Secretary of Labor needs to be a true advocate for working people. Even when we disagree, we expect a fair arbiter who listens to workers and respects the deliberative process. The Labor Department's work is essential to protecting working people and should be subject to less influence from corporate lobbyists, not more. Scalia's views are dangerously outside the mainstream and leave us no choice but to oppose his nomination."

Since his DOL stint, Scalia's been a management-side labor lawyer and, records show, the prime business mover behind the GOP's successful effort to kill the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's ergonomics rule.

He also was the lawyer for Walmart when Maryland required all firms in the state employing more than 10,000 people to devote at least 8% of payroll to health insurance for their workers. Walmart was the only firm that flunked, while its two unionized su-

permarket competitors, Giant and Safeway, didn't. Scalia got a federal appellate court to toss the law.

And Scalia represented SeaWorld in a notorious case, which the firm lost at the Securities and Exchange Commission. SeaWorld's CEO

failed to tell investors that liability for a killer whale's gruesome drowning of its female trainer would affect the firm's profits and stock price.

SeaWorld took the case to court, challenging the government. Scalia represented them and defended the firm, the


CEO, and the whale who killed the worker. He lost 2-1 before a 3-judge panel of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for D.C. The dissenting judge was Brett Kavanaugh, whom Trump has since named to the U.S. Supreme Court.



AMERICA'S TOP LABOR RIGHTS DEFENDER? Eugene Scalia at a black-tie Federalist Society gala to honor his father, the late U.S. Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia.

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