

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Scott (VA-03)

Full Committee Hearing

Examining the Policies and Priorities of the U.S. Department of Labor

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Wednesday, June 7, 2023 | 10:15 a.m.

Thank you, Dr. Foxx.

Acting Secretary Su, good morning and thank you for being with us.

You're here with us now and we have had problems getting previous administration officials to the committee but thank you for being with us today.

We have an opportunity to discuss the work of President Biden and Acting Secretary Su and what they have done to support workers, businesses, and our economy—as well as the investments we must continue to make.

Committee Democrats and I strongly support Ms. Su's nomination to be Secretary of Labor because she represents the best of America. She's the daughter of immigrants, who owned a small laundromat and a franchise pizza restaurant, and she became the first in her family to attend law school.

But we support Ms. Su's nomination not just because of who she is – but for what she has done.

Throughout her service as California Labor Commissioner, Secretary of the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency, and Deputy Secretary of Labor, she has been a committed public servant who has dedicated her career to supporting workers and families.

Thanks to her and President Biden's leadership—and the responsible actions taken by Democrats last Congress—unemployment rates remain near historic lows, our job market is continuing to grow, and workers are seeing higher wages. Since taking office, the Biden administration has created more than 13 million jobs. This is more jobs created in 28 months than any previous president has created in a single, 48-month term.

According to the White House, the last time we had such a long stretch of low unemployment was in the 1960s. The share of working-age Americans in the workforce is at its highest level in 16 years. And that's the record.

I also remind my colleagues that every Democratic administration since the Kennedy administration has left for their Republican successors a better deficit situation than the one they inherited, and every Republican administration since Nixon has left for their Democratic successors a worse deficit situation than the one they inherited—without exception. And President Biden is continuing this trend as he creates record numbers of jobs.

The evidence is clear that President Biden's economic agenda is working. This means that my Republican colleagues have had to resort to baseless claims and desperate attacks to oppose Ms. Su's nomination.

There's an old saying among lawyers: *"If you have the law on your side, pound the law. If not, but you have the facts on your side, pound the facts. If you have neither the law nor the facts, pound the table."*

Julie Su is an impeccably qualified candidate to serve as Secretary of Labor, and she has been integral to our sustained economic recovery. So, get ready for people to be pounding the table.

Committee Republicans may talk about unemployment insurance fraud in California. This is not Ms. Su's doing. In fact, under her leadership, California implemented additional safeguards that helped prevent UI fraud and stopped an estimated tens of billions of dollars in fraudulent payments.

They may talk about independent contractors and the Labor Department's proposed rule—but do not be confused by Republican attempts to conflate California's state law with federal regulation. The proposed regulation does not implement California's AB-5, which adopts what's known as the ABC test. In fact, the Biden administration clearly noted that it is legally constrained from adopting the ABC test. So, this line of attack on Ms. Su doesn't hold up either.

Committee Republicans may talk about child labor, but Ms. Su is certainly not among the Republican state legislators who are working to roll back child labor protections.

Unfortunately, we can expect Republicans on the Committee to pound the table this morning since they have no substantive criticism of Ms. Su's record in the Department of Labor.

In contrast, Committee Democrats remain focused on concrete solutions to put money back into workers' pockets, keep workers healthy and safe on the job, and ensure all workers can enjoy a dignified retirement. I hope my Republican colleagues will put politics aside and work with us to deliver on these priorities.

So, thank you, Ms. Su, for your leadership and for joining us today. I hope we remain focused on what is most important: improving the lives of workers and their families.