



National Employment
Law Project

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**Statement of Christine L. Owens, Executive Director,
National Employment Law Project
On the Nomination of
New York Labor Commissioner M. Patricia Smith
As Solicitor of the United States Department of Labor**

President Obama's nomination of New York Labor Commissioner M. Patricia Smith to be Solicitor of the United States Department of Labor is an inspired choice.

Commissioner Smith is an innovative and dedicated leader who has devoted her career to enforcing the law and protecting the rights of workers. During her tenure at the New York State Department of Labor, Commissioner Smith has instituted significant reforms at the agency, creating a Bureau of Immigrant Workers' Rights, pursuing targeted investigations to protect workers in high-violation industries, and instituting a number of reforms to help workers access unemployment benefits at a time of great need.

Placing Commissioner Smith in charge of the United States Labor Department's enforcement of core workplace standards will go a long way toward restoring the Department to its historic mission of protecting and promoting the rights and interests of America's workers.

The National Employment Law Project applauds this extraordinary appointment and calls on the Senate to confirm Commissioner Smith as the next Solicitor of Labor promptly.

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