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LEGAL ALERT



## Legal Alert: DOL's 2010 Budget Calls for an Increase in Enforcement Funding

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Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis recently submitted the Department of Labor (DOL's) proposed budget, which, she states, will restore worker protection programs, promote green jobs, and ensure accountability and transparency. Under this budget, the DOL expects to hire nearly 1,000 new employees, including about 670 investigators, restoring worker protection staffing to FY 2001 levels.

The budget requests an increase of \$35 million in funding for the Wage and Hour Division for FY 2010. According to the DOL, this includes funding to hire 200 new investigators. A DOL press release states, "with these increases, Labor's worker protection agencies will be able to vigorously protect wages and working conditions of the 135 million workers in more than 7.3 million workplaces."

The DOL's budget request also includes an increase of approximately \$51 million for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). With this funding, the DOL plans to hire 160 new enforcement staff, many of whom will be bilingual "to communicate with staff in the changing workplace."

Additionally, Secretary Solis has asked for an increase of \$27 million and 213 employees for the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) for FY 2010. According to statements on the DOL's web site, the increase will be directed toward strengthening the OFCCP's "overall enforcement posture and commitment to strong enforcement of three legal authorities: Executive Order 11246, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as amended." The DOL also states that a significant percentage of the budget will support enforcement and outreach efforts related to compensation.

### Employers' Bottom Line

The proposed budget reflects the DOL's commitment to increased enforcement efforts, which means employers need to take steps now to ensure they are in compliance with all applicable federal regulations governing the workplace. If you have any questions about the federal regulations governing the workplace or other labor or employment related issues, please contact the Ford & Harrison attorney with whom you usually work.