



FOOD STORES, INC.

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My name is Shelly Little-Gibbons, my family owns Quik Mart Stores, Inc. in Tucson, Arizona. My Father, Wes Little, started Quik Mart in 1965, when he opened three (3) stores. My mother and father chose the colors (fire engine red and sunshine yellow), our logo, and the name Quik Mart. After these three stores opened, mom and dad would scrap and save until they had enough money to buy another corner or build another store. They did not borrow from the bank to expand the business.

Growing up, there are a few memories I remember clearly. One is Dad working extremely hard to keep the business running, but also being home every night for family dinner. Another is how we would take "Sunday drives". Mom and Dad would pack us three kids in the car and we would drive around the streets of Tucson. As I got older, I realized our family drives were to look at different street corners where dad was contemplating building another store. Another family tradition was after a new store opened, in the evenings, we would all drive out to the new location to "visit" and check out how it looked at night.

Quik Mart slowly grew from the three (3) stores in 1965 to the twenty-seven (27) stores we have today all in Pima County. The 27 stores we have today are not all the original stores. We have opened and closed and renamed many a store. Since all stores are family owned and not franchised, if one is not doing well and hurting the company's bottom line, we will close it. Sometimes the city/county help with that by changing traffic flow, so it is not convenient to get to us anymore or sometimes it just turns out not to be a great corner.

Owning convenience stores is a hard business. Especially after 2008, it has become harder and tougher. Our vendors now charge us a fuel surcharge when they deliver product. Unemployment tax, workman comp premiums, payroll tax, health insurance, everything, every year keeps going up while business, with so many people unemployed keeps going down or is staying the same. Also, we are experiencing more shoplifting, beer skips and robberies with people out of work and

desperate. Our next big expense is the new “Affordable Healthcare Act”. We employ over 170 people, so either way we go, providing health insurance for our employees through the company or paying the penalty and sending our employees to the exchange, will be a huge expense for us.

But, with all that I have mentioned, we are proud that we, Quik Mart Stores, Inc. and the Little Family have been open and around for almost fifty(50) years. You do not see too many “family” businesses that have grown and have had such an impact on a community such as ours. We have kept many people employed throughout the years. We have even had many generations of family members work for Quik Mart. People like working for us because we are local. Our corporate office is right here in Tucson – Any of our customer and employees can come by at any time to see us. We have had a lot of loyal employees that have been around for over 30 years and a majority of our employees stay five years or longer. Quik Mart – We’re Tucsonans.

I would like to thank Congressman Ron Barber for inviting me to testify about our business that we are so proud.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shelly Little-Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shelly Little-Gibbons
Vice President
Quik Mart Stores, Inc.