Good morning, members of the Republican Policy Committee. My name is Bill Young, and I serve as Director of Total Rewards and Risk for Sheetz. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today and share our experience with employer-supported childcare through our on-site learning center, Little Sproutz, located at our corporate campus in Claysburg.

Sheetz is one of America's fastest-growing, family-owned and family-operated convenience retailers. Our culture is grounded in a simple belief: taking care of people, including our most important assets: our employees. We are intentional about creating a workplace where employees feel valued, supported, and equipped with the resources they need to succeed, not just professionally, but personally as well.

That commitment led us to partner with Bright Horizons Family Solutions to open the Little Sproutz Early Learning Center in 2017. Bright Horizons brings more than 30-years of experience working with leading employers across the country and around the world, helping ensure we deliver high-quality, reliable early childhood education.

Our decision to invest in childcare was not theoretical, it was driven by real workforce challenges. As our Claysburg campus expanded with the addition of our Distribution Center and Sheetz Bros. Kitchen, our need for talent grew significantly. At the same time, we operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year business. That means many of our employees work early mornings, evenings, and other non-traditional schedules.

For those employees, access to dependable childcare wasn't just difficult, it was often unavailable. And when childcare falls through, employees miss shifts, reduce hours, or leave the workforce altogether. That creates instability for families and real operational challenges for employers.

Little Sproutz was designed specifically to solve that problem. The center offers flexible operating hours from 4:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, hours that better align with the realities of a 24/7 business. It provides care for infants through pre-K, along with school-age summer programs, and has the capacity to serve up to 130 children.

Today, the center supports approximately 70 full-time employees and serves about 105 children. But beyond those numbers, it provides something more important: reliability. Parents know they have a safe, high-quality place for their children, and that allows them to show up to work focused and consistent.

Quality has been a priority from the start. Little Sproutz is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and is a four-star center in Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS program. These are meaningful indicators of excellence in early childhood education, and they give families confidence that their children are not just being cared for but are learning and developing in a strong environment.

We've also worked to make that care accessible. Sheetz provides tuition assistance through scholarships funded by the Pre-K Educational Improvement Tax Credit program. Combined with flexible tuition options based on age and attendance, this helps reduce the financial burden on working families and expands access to high-quality care.

Little Sproutz is also integrated with our on-site Shwellness Center, which provides urgent care services for our employees and their dependents. Care is immediately available to any child who gets sick during the day. The center also offers programming focused on exercise and nutrition, reinforcing healthy habits early in life. This kind of integration creates a more complete support system for both the child and the parent.

From a business standpoint, the results are clear. When employees have reliable childcare, attendance improves. Turnover decreases. Recruitment is easier. But just as importantly, it strengthens engagement and loyalty because employees recognize that their employer is investing in them in a meaningful way.

And this isn't just about business outcomes, it's about people. We've had employees tell us they would not be able to continue working at Sheetz without access to Little Sproutz. For them, this isn't a perk. It's the difference between staying in the workforce or stepping away.

Our experience demonstrates that employer-supported childcare is not simply a benefit, it's a practical, workforce-driven solution. It helps businesses operate more effectively, supports working families, and contributes to stronger, more stable communities.

Programs like the Pre-K Educational Improvement Tax Credit play an important role in making these models possible, and they represent a smart partnership between the public and private sectors.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to share our experience, and I'm happy to answer any questions.