Families across the country are struggling to afford child care and housing. According to research from the National Low Income Housing Coalition, there is a shortage of nearly 7 million affordable homes for very low-income families. Beyond the gap in affordable housing stock, a worker earning minimum wage cannot afford an apartment in any county in the U.S. Despite the cost barriers, we know that housing is foundational to a person’s health, economic livelihood, and stability of their family.

The current state of the care economy compounds this historic challenge. Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that there are nearly 100,000 child care workers who have not returned to the workforce because of a lack of a living wage and the challenges of working a frontline job. Compensation and workforce burdens are heightened by the already high cost of child care: families spend an average of 13 percent of their income on child care and less than 20 percent of children receive the federal assistance they qualify for, according to the Department of the Treasury. It is abundantly clear a market solution cannot fix the care economy; without a federal investment in child care our economy does not work.

While these national crises are not new, the past few years have highlighted the need for creative investments and solutions to make sure every child can have a safe home and access high-quality care. That is why I am introducing the **Build Housing with Care Act**.

As a leader in the fight to revitalize the care economy, my Build Housing with Care Act seeks to inject $500 million to encourage the co-location of affordable housing and child care centers. By locating child care centers within affordable housing buildings or facilitating partnerships between these entities, we can make sure that families can have two essentials for healthy development.

**The Build Housing with Care Act will:**

- Establish grant funding to support the planning and construction costs of child care centers co-located with affordable housing
- Prioritize funding for projects that are located in child care deserts or rural communities, include a qualified Head Start provider, or serve low-income children
- Allow Community Development Financial Institutions to use grant funding to create affordable financing opportunities for housing developers and child care providers or provide child care providers with technical assistance
- Direct the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study how child care and the costs of other basic needs affect residents of public housing and how federal resources, including New Market Tax Credits and Community Development Block Grants, meet the needs of vulnerable Americans