§ 320. Legislative findings and declaration. The legislature finds and declares that an institution embodying the heritage, ideals and concerns of the people of the state of New York for peace and social justice as exemplified by the philosophy and nonviolent leadership of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is an appropriate response to the significant public need for the state to develop methods in addition to current law enforcement responses to curb the use of violence and encourage the nonviolent management of social conflict.

It is further found and declared that people throughout the state fear violence and deplore the social injustice that can give rise to violence. New York state citizens are experiencing increasing racial and cultural hostilities stemming from rapid social change and real and perceived conflicts over group and individual interests and they may be disadvantaged by a lack of problem-solving skills for redressing these social conflicts.

It is further found and declared that many potentially destructive conflicts between different societal groups and interests have been resolved constructively and effectively at the national, state and local level through the use of nonviolent methods as were advocated and exemplified by the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

It is further found and declared there is a need to examine the history, nature, elements and future of nonviolent processes for conflict resolution, and to develop new techniques to promote nonviolence solutions to economic, political, social and cultural conflicts in the state. Such activities conducted through government, private enterprise, and voluntary associations can be strengthened by a state institution devoted to research, education and training and the provision of information services with respect to nonviolent conflict resolution techniques.

To accomplish these public purposes, it therefore is necessary that the state of New York establish the New York state Martin Luther King, Jr. institute for nonviolence to serve the citizens of the state and their government through education and training opportunities, basic and

applied research opportunities, and information services, with respect to the promotion of nonviolent methods and techniques to resolve conflicts among individuals and groups of New York state citizens.