§ 371. Statement of legislative findings and purposes. 1. The legislature hereby finds and declares that:

a. The present level of loss of life, injury to persons, and damage to property as a result of fire demonstrates that the people of the state have yet to receive the basic level of protection to which they are entitled in connection with the construction and maintenance of buildings;

b. There does not exist for all areas of the state a single, adequate, enforceable code establishing minimum standards for fire protection and construction, maintenance and use of materials in buildings. Instead, there exists a multiplicity of codes and requirements for various types of buildings administered at various levels of state and local government. There are, in addition, extensive areas of the state in which no code at all is in effect for the general benefit of the people of the state;

c. The present system of enforcement of fire protection and building construction codes is characterized by a lack of adequately trained personnel, as well as inconsistent qualifications for personnel who administer and enforce those codes;

d. Whether because of the absence of applicable codes, inadequate code provisions or inadequate enforcement of codes, the threat to the public health and safety posed by fire remains a real and present danger for the people of the state; and

e. The multiplicity of fire protection and building construction code requirements poses an additional problem for the people of the state since it increases the cost of doing business in the state by perpetuating multiple requirements, jurisdictional overlaps and business uncertainties, and, in some instances, by artificially inducing high construction costs.

2. The legislature declares that it shall be the public policy of the state of New York to:

a. Immediately provide for a minimum level of protection from the hazards of fire in every part of the state;

b. Provide for the promulgation of a uniform code addressing building construction and fire prevention in order to provide a basic minimum level of protection to all people of the state from hazards of fire and inadequate building construction. In providing for such a uniform code, it is declared to be the policy of the state of New York to:

(1) reconcile the myriad existing and potentially conflicting regulations which apply to different types of buildings and occupancies;

(2) recognize that fire prevention and fire prevention codes are closely related to the adequacy of building construction codes, that the greatest portion of a building code's requirements are fire safety oriented, and that fire prevention and building construction concerns should be the subject of a single code;

(3) recognize that the decarbonization of new and existing buildings is closely related to the state's clean energy and climate agenda as described in the New York climate leadership and community protection act set forth in chapter one hundred six of the laws of two thousand nineteen, and that the uniform code shall enable the state's clean energy objectives;

(4) place public and private buildings on an equal plane with respect to fire prevention and adequacy of building construction;

(5) require new and existing buildings alike to keep pace with advances in technology concerning fire prevention and building construction, including, where appropriate, that provisions apply on a retroactive basis; and

(6) provide protection to both residential and non-residential buildings;

c. Insure that the uniform code be in full force and effect in every area of the state;

d. Encourage local governments to exercise their full powers to administer and enforce the uniform code; and

e. Provide for a uniform, statewide approach to the training and qualification of personnel engaged in the administration and enforcement of the uniform code.