**§ 2005. Legislative intent.** 1. The legislature finds that Alzheimer's disease and related dementing illnesses which destroy certain vital cells in the brain, currently affect more than four hundred thousand New Yorkers. Although these diseases are not limited to the elderly, medical researchers have projected that Alzheimer's disease and related diseases of the brain will show a significant increase in numbers to coincide with the growth in the population of the elderly. Because of the inability of persons with Alzheimer's and related dementias to live in safety or undertake even the simplest tasks of daily living without cueing, assistance and/or supervision, this population requires a high level of care throughout the moderate and advanced stages of the disease. The reconfiguration of the health care delivery system currently underway necessitates special recognition of this patient population which often, while sometimes otherwise physically healthy, demands this high level of care because of their cognitive impairment and other dementia symptoms.

2. In response to the needs of New York state's Alzheimer's community, and stemming from within this community, a statewide network of not-for-profit corporations have been established, dedicated specifically to responding at the local level to the needs of this community. This network provides important support and educational services to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's disease. Eighty percent of all Alzheimer's care is provided at home and/or in the community, and is delivered by family caregivers. By supporting family caregivers and informal supports at home and in the community, costly institutionalization can be significantly delayed or avoided altogether. This results in a more effective utilization of resources. It is the intent of the legislature to encourage and foster such home and community-based assistance through this existing network of not-for-profit corporations. It is further important in this time of changing resources and resource allocation, to encourage this network to work closely with the department to ensure that the Alzheimer's community is appropriately educated and included with respect to all available health care options.