§ 4600. Legislative findings and purpose. The dramatic increase in the numbers of elderly people, especially those seventy-five years of age and older, coupled with the special housing and health care needs of this growing segment of the population, requires the development of new and creative approaches to help ensure the care of older people in residential settings of their own choice. If carefully planned and monitored, life care communities have the potential to provide a continuum of care for older people that will provide an attractive residential option for such persons, while meeting their long term care needs for life. To ensure that the financial, consumer, and health care interest of individuals who enroll in such communities will be protected, such communities must be effectively managed and carefully overseen.

The intent of the legislature, therefore, is to allow for the prudent development of life care communities. The legislature further intends to require that the relevant state agencies coordinate the regulation of such communities in order to ensure that there are adequate safeguards for those elderly who become residents and to assist in the orderly development, of such communities. Although lead responsibility for the interagency coordination of the regulation and establishment of such communities is vested in the department of health, the legislature does not intend that such communities become or be perceived as primarily medically-oriented facilities. The legislature intends, instead, that such communities be viewed as an attractive and innovative residential alternative for older New Yorkers who are seeking to maintain, to the extent possible, an independent and active life in a community in which their long-term care needs will be met.