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HEALTH
BOARD**

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Umatilla Tribe
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Yakama Nation

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RESOLUTION #09-03-03

**Support for NPAIHB *EpiCenter* Data Linkages with Vital Statistics
Records of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington**

WHEREAS, the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) is a tribal organization under P.L. 93-638 that represents forty-three Federally-recognized Indian tribes in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington on health related issues; and

WHEREAS, the NPAIHB is dedicated to assisting and promoting the health needs and concerns of Indian people; and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of the NPAIHB is to improve the health and quality of life of its member tribes; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of this goal in 1997, NPAIHB established the Northwest Tribal Epidemiology Center (*EpiCenter*) in an effort to improve the quality of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) epidemiology data; and

WHEREAS, The *EpiCenter* has gained national recognition for developing and implementing many useful and innovative projects to improve the health and quality of life of Northwest tribes and has served as a national model for other Indian Health Service (IHS) areas to emulate in establishing their *EpiCenter* programs; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Tribal Registry (NTR) has performed, Board approved, record linkage studies to identify and correct racial misclassification in various public health registries to better assess burden of disease and mortality for Northwest AI/ANs; and

WHEREAS, previous research by the NPAIHB *EpiCenter* has shown that morbidity and mortality data for Northwest AI/AN are under-reported due primarily to misclassification of race in vital health records; and

WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington experience disparities in mortality from many causes; and

WHEREAS, the correct identification of AI/AN in vital statistics records is essential for understanding the distribution of health events and planning prevention and intervention efforts; and

WHEREAS, the NPAIHB *EpiCenter* has consistently demonstrated adequate measures to insure the physical security of data and has policies in place to control access to and release of data; and

WHEREAS, any publications presenting the results of these linkages will only be done in collaboration with and by approval of NPAIHB and the NPAIHB *EpiCenter*.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the NPAIHB endorses and supports an effort by staff of the *EpiCenter*, under the guidance of the Executive Director, to complete record linkages with the vital statistics records of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington to correct racial misclassification of AI/AN such that they can more accurately report on mortality trends for AI/AN in the Northwest.

CERTIFICATION

NO. 09-03-03

The foregoing resolution was duly adopted at the regular session of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board. A quorum being established; 29 for, 0 against, 0 abstain on April 23, 2009.

Andrew C. Joseph Jr.
Chairman

Date

Stella M. Washburn
Secretary