Resolution from the PRIM&R Board of Directors to William Freeman, MD, MPH, CIP

Whereas Dr. Freeman is the past Director of Research for the Indian Health Service where he served in numerous leadership and advocacy roles for American Indian and tribal communities; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman is presently the Director of Tribal Community Health Programs and Human Protections Administrator at Northwest Indian College; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman also serves as a private consultant to numerous universities and organizations; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman was the Applied Research Ethics National Association’s (ARENA) thirteenth president in 1998; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman guided ARENA through a difficult financial period in 1998 and, under his stewardship, the organization was returned to financial strength; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman was a member of the PRIM&R Board of Directors and serves on the Membership Committee; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman has served on the faculty of numerous PRIM&R and ARENA conferences; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman, inspired by his work with the Indian Health Service, has worked hard to promote greater diversity within PRIM&R’s membership, co-founding the scholars program for representatives from HBCUs, HSIs, and Tribal Colleges; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman has been a strong and effective advocate for the Certification of IRB Professionals (CIP®) program; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman was the recipient of the ARENA Legacy Award in 2008; and

Whereas Dr. Freeman shared memories of his ARENA service by submitting the following note… “The most meaningful thing I did as president was to organize and then chair a panel at the… ARENA Meeting in 1998, titled ‘Can Tuskegee happen again?’ I asked IRBers from historically black schools of medicine to be panelists…I assumed that the panelists would agree with me, that the answer to the topic’s question was ‘no.’ Warren Ashe answered me with his own question, ‘Does a leopard change its spots?’ The Syphilis Study had taken place and continued for 40 years in a society that was unjust. It was conducted by people whose thoughts, moral vision, and understanding were influenced by racial prejudice. Could, and would, researchers and IRBs in an unjust society with members deeply prejudiced against some groups prevent unethical or unjust research from happening to those groups, in spite of their prejudice? Could, and would, researchers and the IRB system protect groups that the society in general, (including some IRB members), considered less than fully human?’ …I ended the panel with my brief observations as moderator: In spite of our IRB system, something like ‘Tuskegee’ could indeed happen again — to people whom society despised or thought of as not fully human, as ‘not deserving full legal or social protections,’ such as child sex abusers or drug addicts (especially if these populations are members of minority racial or ethnic groups);’”

Therefore be it resolved that the PRIM&R Board of Directors, staff, and the wider PRIM&R community, on this third day of December, 2011, do hereby convey their heartfelt appreciation and boundless gratitude to Dr. Freeman for his long, loyal, and distinguished service to both ARENA and PRIM&R.