

ARIZONA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

PRIMARY SEAT BELT LAW

WHEREAS, motor vehicle crashes are among Arizona's leading causes of death, and, on average, crashes claim more than 1,000 lives each year, and

WHEREAS, in 2001 there were 6,833 Arizona children injured in crashes and 64 children who died, and

WHEREAS, seat belt usage is lower in the minority communities, contributing to an elevated injury rate among minority populations, especially Native Americans and Hispanics. The elimination of health disparities is a high priority of *Healthy Arizona 2010*, and

WHEREAS, elevated hospitalization rates due to crashes are seen in urban and rural areas of Arizona, and

WHEREAS, rates of injury and death can be significantly reduced by wearing safety belts, and

WHEREAS, Arizona's current rate of seat belt usage is only 74%, and

WHEREAS, passage of a Primary Belt Enforcement Law (allowing law enforcement offices to stop vehicles in which occupants are not properly belted) will result in an 11% increase in utilization of safety belts (to 85%), and

WHEREAS, this increased utilization will prevent 73 crash fatalities annually, prevent 1415 injuries, and avoid \$104.9 million in medical, funeral, and other costs associated with injury, and

WHEREAS, passage of a Primary Belt Enforcement Law will qualify Arizona for \$1 million annually in federal funds for the next five years,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Arizona Public Health Association supports the passage of a Primary Belt Enforcement Law in Arizona, AND will transmit a letter to the Arizona Governor's Office for Highway Safety in support of such legislation.

Presented at the Annual Meeting, September 25, 2003

Action: