



# BEYOND THE ASTERISK

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## Disaggregating Data for Tribal Nations

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# A Unified Voice for Indian Country



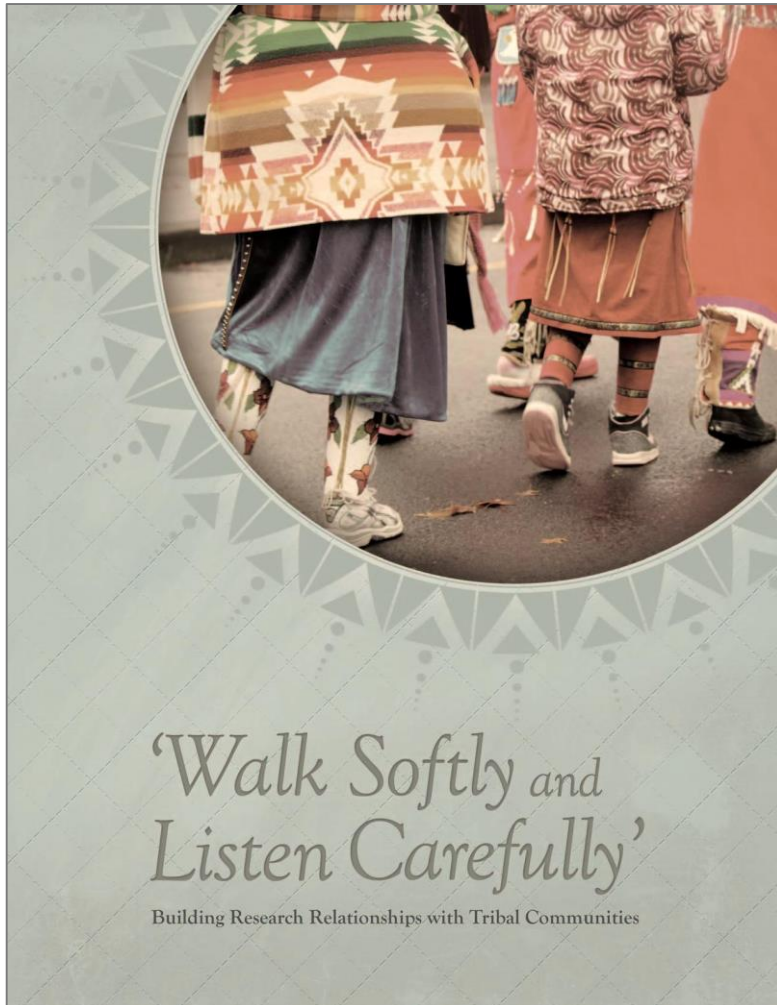
## National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), est. 1944

- Serves broad interests of tribal governments and communities
- Representative congress of AI/AN tribes
- Protect and enhance sovereign and treaty rights while securing our traditional laws, cultures, and ways of life
- Advance a common understanding of the rightful place of tribes in the family of American governments



## NCAI Policy Research Center (PRC), est. 2003

- Ensure research protects and benefits Native sovereignty
- Share tribal success to build capacity and advance policy
- Synthesize and disseminate new data
- Partner to improve data quality
- Foster regional support for research



# PURPOSE & METHODS

## *Six Driving Questions*

1. What has been published on AI/AN disaggregation?
2. What are the priority issues of concern? Are they unique?
3. Are there demographic or other variables related to AI/AN experiences that are important to collect data on (e.g., generation)?
4. What is the potential and importance of disaggregating within the AI/AN category?
5. What are the potential benefits of data disaggregation?
6. What organizations could lead and inform this work with AI/AN peoples?

## *Resources*

19 academic,  
23 policy, and  
7 media  
literature  
resources  
+ NCAI reports

## *Reviewers*

20 Indian Country  
experts, scholars



# FINDINGS

## Common Concerns

- History of recognition as "persons" in the US
- Sampling & statistical reliability
- Dis-inclusion as a small population
- Cost constraints





# FINDINGS

Multiple “**definitions of Indian**” in use by federal agencies impact the utility of disaggregated data;

- Political pressures of formula (population-based) funding
- Challenges to fulfilling the trust responsibility

Ongoing **data quality challenges** constrain accurate data disaggregation;

- Racial misclassification, verification, and exclusion
- Units of disaggregation (nation, geography, status)
- Concerns for community confidentiality



# DEFINITIONS & DIVISIONS

**OMB:** "...a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South American (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment."

**Versus Citizenship:** An individual that identifies as American Indian, Alaska Native, Native American, Indian, or Native may or may not adequately meet criteria, set forth by their own tribal nation, to verify tribal status.



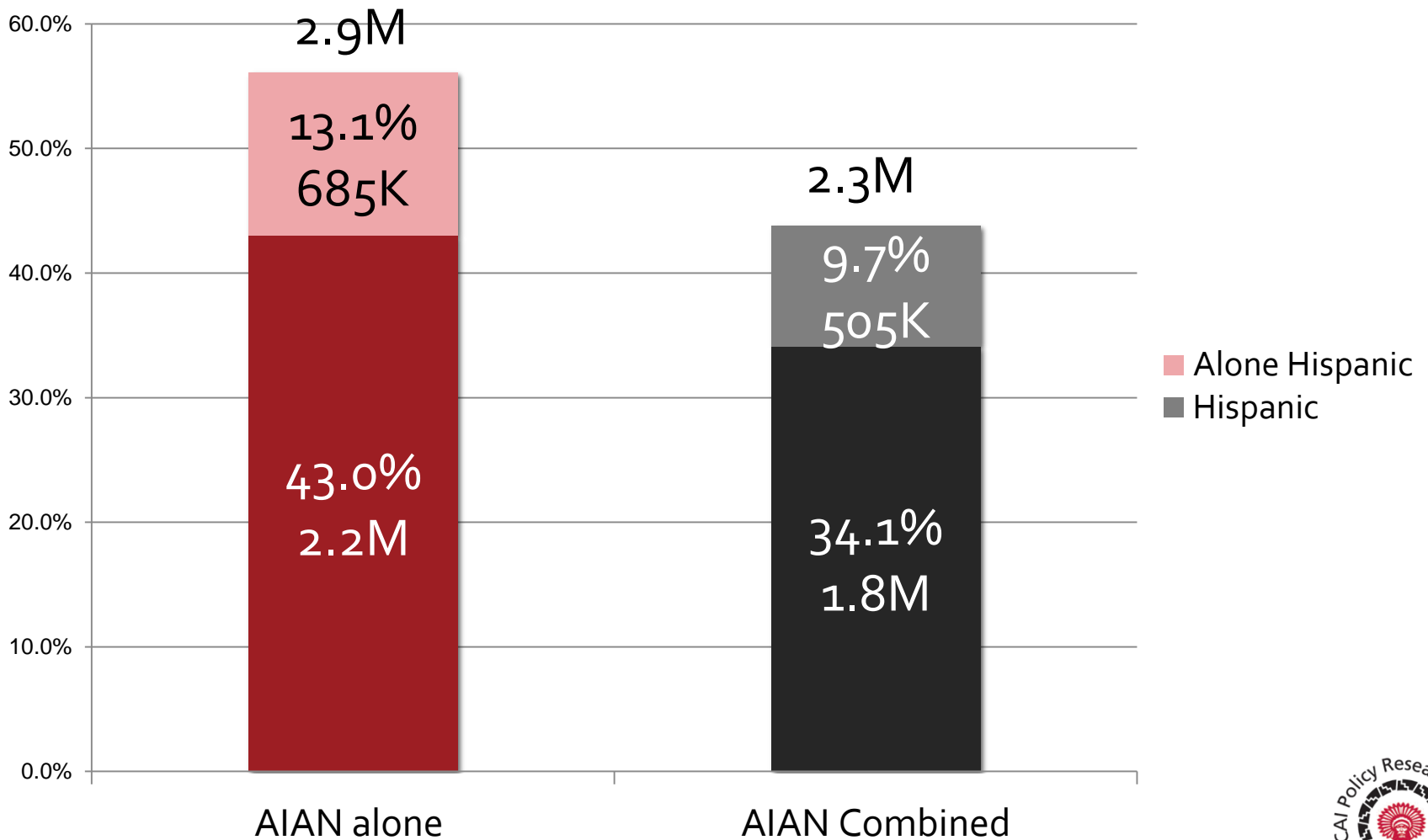
# DEFINITIONS & DIVISIONS

- **HHS, HUD, DOL, DOI: Self-Identification for Service Population**
- **Indian Health Service: legal and political obligation to provide health services to AI/AN people based on treaties.**
  - Population eligible for services: estimated with Census data
  - Self-identified persons living in states having a federal Indian reservation and in Oklahoma and Alaska
  - In 2014, the IHS service pop: 2.1 million (**58%** of all AIAN)
  - No representative data on remaining **42%**.
  - Growth rate of about 1.8 percent per year since 2000

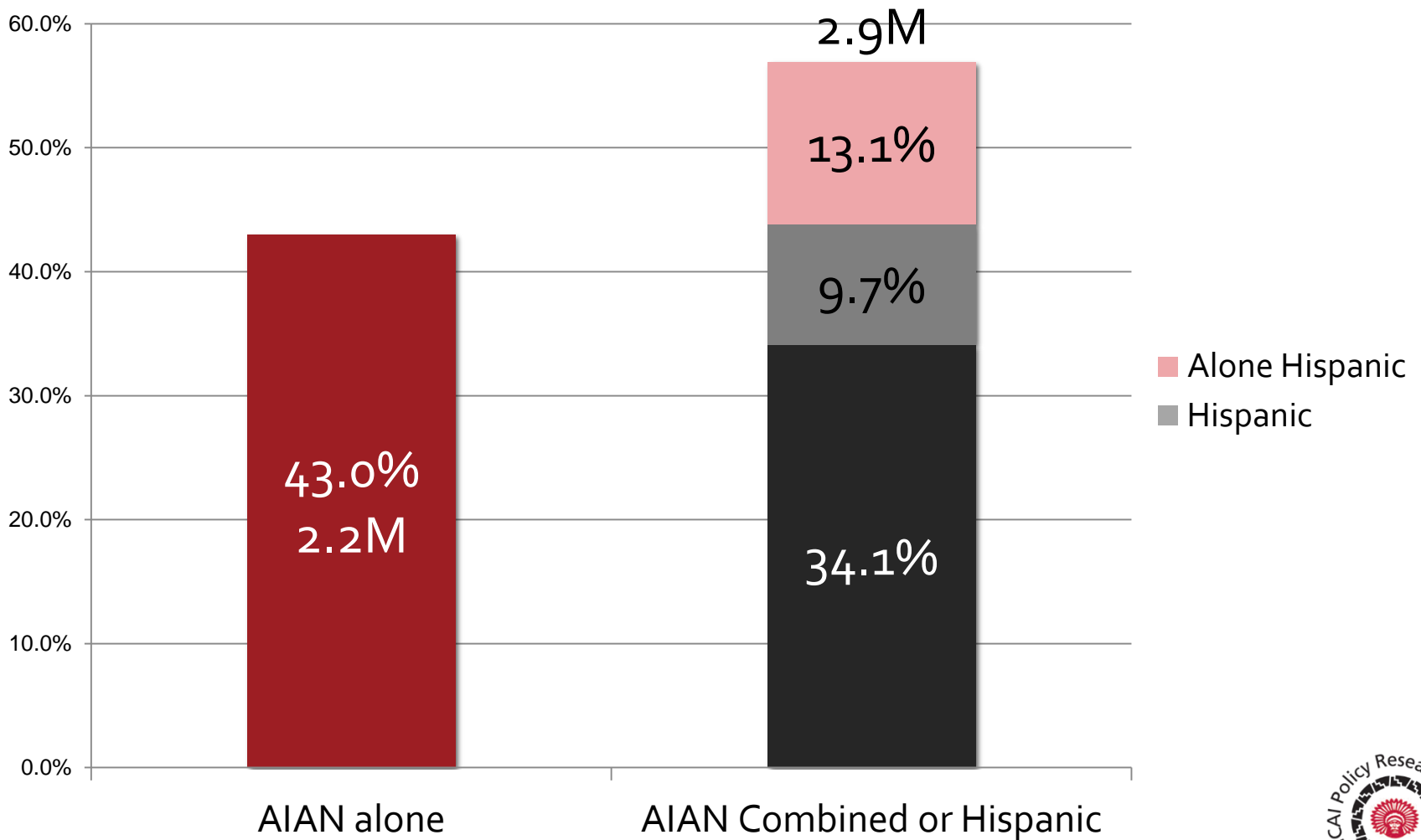




# Multiple Definitions/Categories



# Multiple Definitions/Categories



# DATA QUALITY CONCERNS

## The Misclassification of AI/ANs

Very common in health and other datasets

- Hospital discharge data
- Mortality and cancer registry data
- Child abuse and neglect
- Injury rates

AI/AN racial misclassification is *lower* in Alaska and the Southwest, *higher* in the Southern Plains



# DATA QUALITY CONCERNS

## Strategies

- Link Indian Health Service records with mortality and cancer registries
- Uniform race reporting across states and health care facilities can help with misclassification
- Local government partnership between tribes, counties, and cities could also facilitate better reporting of race and tribe, especially on death certificates.



# DATA QUALITY CONCERNS

## The Exclusion of AI/ANs: Creating the “Asterisk Nation”

- Costs in constructing a large enough sample;
- Geographically dispersed nature of the AI/AN population;
- A lack of investment in tribal data infrastructure; and
- A lack of awareness about the uniqueness of tribal governments





# RECOMMENDATIONS

## **Build tribal data capacity**

- Survey of Tribal Data Practices & State-of-the-Art Report

## **Inform the standardization of AI/AN data collection and reporting across federal agencies**

- NCAI resolutions process

## **Amend reporting practices and policies that inhibit the disaggregation of current data, where appropriate**

## **Support regional intertribal entities in increasing data disaggregation and providing TA**



# Thank You

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