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NATIONAL SURVEY FINDS VAST MAJORITY OF AMERICANS CONCERNED ABOUT WATER SHORTAGES; SUPPORT DESALINATION LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A recently conducted national survey found that a vast majority of Americans believe the potential for a water shortage is a significant issue. Additionally, the survey revealed that eight out of ten Americans favor desalination as a means to help solve the country's growing water shortage.

The survey, conducted by Wilson Research Strategies, Inc., was sponsored by the U.S. Desalination Coalition. A sample of 1,003 adults age 18 and over was chosen for the study, with a margin of error of $\pm 3.1\%$. Interviews were conducted, via telephone, on July 23-25, 2004.

Fully 79% of Americans regard water shortages to be a significant issue for them and their families. An equal percentage support desalination, the process of removing salt from seawater and brackish groundwater, as part of a solution. Only 10% of the respondents were opposed to the use of desalination. And 70% favor using federal funding to facilitate the construction and operation of desalination plants.

“These high favorability numbers show that Americans not only feel that water shortage is an important issue,” affirmed Jim Adams, President and COO of Wilson Research Strategies. “But that they also believe desalination is worth funding with their own money (federal dollars), which is a highly uncommon stance in America.”

The U.S. Desalination Coalition, a non-profit trade association comprised of fourteen water utilities, is in strong support of H.R. 3834, a bill that would provide \$200 million in funding over a five-year period to help fund construction of desalination facilities. A hearing for H.R. 3834 is scheduled to begin on September 9, 2004 in the Water and Power subcommittee of the House Resources Committee.

“Desalination is an issue whose time has come,” stated Hal Furman, executive director of the U.S. Desalination Coalition. “The time for Congress and the President to act is now, before America's water supply problem becomes a full blown national crisis.”