

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF  
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**HEARING ON WATER SUPPLY CHALLENGES FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

**BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**MAY 14, 2008**

**Summary of Written Testimony**

One of the chief potential challenges to ensuring a reliable water supply will be climate variability and climate change. An analysis of recent climate patterns indicates that both are already starting to challenge water supplies in our nation, and that these on-going challenges provide an important lesson for the future. Climate variability, in the form of decades-long drought, is a major threat to ensuring sufficient water supplies. Human-caused climate change, including temperature increases, snowpack reductions, streamflow decreases, and increased probability of drought, will only make the situation more challenging. Options for meeting these climate challenges include much needed focused research, a new national climate service focused on local and regional decision-makers, and a policy that reduces global greenhouse gas emissions. The outlook for climate-related changes in U.S. water supply is not positive, particularly in the West, Southwest, Texas and into the Southeast. Even in other parts of the nation, water supply could become more limiting. However, the good news is that there is time to prepare for increasing water supply challenge, and to also avoid water supply reduction threats deemed dangerous. Urgent attention is warranted.