



## Senate Authorizes \$25 Million for California Groundwater Remediation

*- Establishes a federal fund to reimburse local water authorities in the Santa Ana watershed and Santa Clara Valley for perchlorate contamination cleanup -*

September 29, 2006

**Washington, DC** – The Senate today authorized \$25 million for groundwater remediation to clean up perchlorate contamination in California, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) announced.

The provision was included in the National Heritage Areas Act of 2005, which had previously been approved by the House and will now go to the President for signature.

Specifically, the perchlorate measure establishes a California Basins Groundwater Remediation Fund that will manage \$25 million in reimbursements to the local water authorities of the Santa Ana watershed and the Santa Clara Valley, two of the communities in California most affected by the contamination of perchlorate.

**“The funds approved by the Senate today will reimburse local cleanup efforts to remove the contamination of perchlorate from the groundwater used by hundreds of thousands of people in the Inland Empire and the Santa Clara Valley,”** Senator Feinstein said.

**“The more we learn about the potential health risks from perchlorate contamination, the more cause for concern. So, these funds will make a real difference in ensuring that California’s communities will no longer have to pay exorbitant costs to have access to drinking water free of perchlorate contamination.”**

### **Background**

In sufficient doses, perchlorate, a chemical used for explosives, rockets, and missiles, has been shown to impair thyroid function and result in neurological impairment of fetuses and babies, metabolic disorders and other problems. Nationwide monitoring has found that perchlorate has endangered the water supply of 35 States, and the situation is particularly severe in California.. Additionally, scientific studies have found perchlorate in our food supply – especially in crops such as lettuce and other fruits and vegetables irrigated by perchlorate-contaminated water.

In November 2004, the Food and Drug Administration reported detecting perchlorate in 90% of lettuce samples collected in California, Arizona, Texas, Florida and New Jersey. Additionally, 101 out of 104 milk samples purchased from retail stores around the country, including Pennsylvania, Georgia, Louisiana, Washington, Missouri, Texas and Kansas, contained perchlorate.

Children may be vulnerable to perchlorate because it has been shown to reduce the production of thyroid hormone. This hormone plays a critical role in development, and insufficient levels can permanently damage a child's physical and mental abilities.

###