

For additional information contact:

David Nassar

The Hawthorn Group, L.C.

703-299-4499

dnassar@hawthorngroup.com

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New Poll Reveals Americans' High Hopes For – But High Fears of – Drones

Alexandria, Virginia – The world's largest conference on drones – unmanned flying vehicles increasingly used by governments, industry and individuals – meeting this week in Amsterdam, heard that only a small majority of Americans view drones favorably, and a strong majority have serious safety concerns about them. However, Americans overwhelmingly expect drones to begin home deliveries in the next five to ten years.

Those sometimes-contradictory findings were shared by veteran U.S. political and crisis communications expert John Ashford, chairman of The Hawthorn Group, an Alexandria, Virginia based public affairs firm. They were based on a poll Hawthorn commissioned from TargetPoint who completed 801 telephone interviews November 17-19, with a margin of error of +/- three points. Additional data on shooting down drones and security threats from Chinese manufactured drones came from an on-line poll conducted by 1Q on November 25.

The TargetPoint poll's specific findings were as follows:

- **Americans expect drones to be more prevalent and currently trust the industry**
 - 70% expect home delivery in 5-10 years.
 - 68% believe that commercial use over communities will be safe.
- **However, support for drones is soft.**
 - 58% think drones are a good idea; 42% do not
 - 51% support neighborhood deliveries; 49% think they are too dangerous.
- **A strong majority is concerned about safety and drones.**
 - 68% are concerned; only 7% are not concerned at all.
- **An overwhelming majority expect something will go wrong and support regulation.**
 - 82% believe commercial drones used for small scale and cargo deliveries will cause a serious accident sooner or later.
 - 71% have privacy concerns.
 - 93% want some form of regulation.

- The 1Q poll found that **Chinese made drones raise additional concerns**
 - 83% think security concerns about Chinese manufacturers are valid.
 - 71% think Chinese made drones should be banned from U.S. Government Agencies.
 - 55% think Chinese made drones should be banned from U.S. businesses and individuals.

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Based in Alexandria, Virginia, The Hawthorn Group is an international public affairs firm of senior corporate and political communications experts specializing in building grassroots and grassroots support for issues to achieve public policy objectives. With activities and projects in more than 33 states over the past two years alone, Hawthorn has built campaigns that engage and recruit both grassroots and opinion leader support on issues of broad public concern, including: energy and tax policy, infrastructure programs, business development and resource planning. Hawthorn finds and provides all appropriate means of persuasion, from industry coalitions to individual networking, from traditional advertising to community relations, from media relations to social media, blending all the available tools into the art of advocacy.