

ACT 266

S.B. NO. 115

A Bill for an Act Making an Appropriation for the Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory.

*Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:*

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory (HURL), University of Hawaii, provides the State of Hawaii with a manned deep submergence capability for the study and assessment of the living and geological resources of the 200-mile Hawaiian exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The HURL is the only academically-based deep submergence program in the Pacific and one of the only two such facilities in the United States, and is capable of assessing Hawaii's marine resources to depths of 6,600 feet. The program is partially federally-funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Undersea Research Program. The remainder of the program's funding has come from the legislature and contract services on state-related projects.

Direct fisheries resource studies, especially those over seamounts or banks of the Hawaiian EEZ, using the HURL submersibles and remotely-operated vehicles, have not been possible to date because of the lack of an ocean-going, dedicated support ship, the R/V KAIMIKAI-O-KANALOA. Such a dedicated support ship is now being constructed and will be operational by April 1992. Deployment for research in the northern end of the Hawaiian chain is being planned for later in 1992. The NOAA is providing the funds for construction of the vessel and for the on-board PISCES V handling equipment and remotely-operated vehicles (ROV). In order to expand the ship's capability for night-time ROV and remote camera operations from aboard the ship, an ocean floor navigation system and conducting cable with a winch are urgently needed. This equipment would allow real-time positioning and operation of robotic devices on the ocean floor from aboard the ship. The HURL would then be able to fully investigate the State's great potential in the area of seamount and other bottom fisheries in the EEZ.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$500,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1991-1992, for the purchase of the following equipment:

- (1) \$350,000 for a conducting cable and refurbished winch to allow for the use of remotely-operated vehicles on the ocean floor; and
- (2) \$150,000 for a long baseline navigation system.

SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 1991.

(Approved June 14, 1991.)