

ACT 5

S.B. NO. 15-S

A Bill for an Act Relating to Public Access.

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

PART I. PUBLIC ACCESS ROOM/STATE CAPITOL AND SOUND SYSTEM

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that an informed and active citizenry is essential to ensure a healthy democracy that nurtures and provides for a government for, by, and of the people. Since the legislature relies heavily on direct public input in its decision making, a permanent public access program was established in Act 259, Session Laws of Hawaii 1994, to encourage, educate, and support citizen participation in the legislative process.

A major component of the legislature's public access program is the public access room in the state capitol. The public access room provides staff to educate citizens in the legislative process and the use of computer technology for retrieving legislative information. In the public access room, computer terminals, facsimile and copy machines, work space to prepare testimony, and a variety of other equipment and services are provided for public use.

In addition, when the legislature returns to the state capitol, it is critical that the public can hear the proceedings while attending public hearings. The installation

and use of sound systems in conference rooms in the state capitol is indispensable in assuring public access to the legislature.

The purpose of this part is to provide funds for staff, operations, and equipment of the public access room, and the installation and operation of sound systems for house and senate conference rooms in the state capitol.

SECTION 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$60,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995-1996, to provide year-round funding for the staff, equipment, and operation of the public access room.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the following sums, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995-1996, for the installation and operation of sound systems for house and senate conference rooms in the state capitol:

House of Representatives	\$20,000
Senate	\$20,000

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the house of representatives and the senate respectively, for the purposes of this part.

PART II. BROADCASTS OF LEGISLATIVE PROCEEDINGS

SECTION 4. The legislature, through the passage of Act 331, Session Laws of Hawaii 1989, embarked upon a program to increase public access and participation in the legislative process through the utilization of new information technologies. Act 259, Session Laws of Hawaii 1994, provided funds for the broadcast of the 1995 legislative session. The legislature wishes to continue to provide greater public access to legislative proceedings by making possible the broadcasting of floor sessions, committee hearings, and briefings via cable television to all counties in the State.

The purpose of this part is to appropriate funds to provide for broadcasts of legislative proceedings, authorize expenditure of previously appropriated funds for legislative broadcasts in 1995 and 1996, and appropriate funds for plans and design to install broadcast infrastructure and equipment to provide television broadcasts of legislative proceedings.

SECTION 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$25,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995-1996, for production and distribution of television broadcasts of legislative proceedings during 1995-1996.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

SECTION 6. Act 259, Session Laws of Hawaii 1994, is amended by amending section 3 to read as follows:

“SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the following sums, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal [year] years 1994-1995[,] and 1995-1996, for the purposes of providing cable

television broadcasts [for the 1995 regular legislative session:] of legislative proceedings:

Senate	\$100,000
House of Representatives	\$100,000

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the senate and the house of representatives, respectively, for the purposes of this Act.’’

SECTION 7. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$20,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995–1996, for plans and design to install electronic hardware and equipment, which may include but not be limited to cameras, cables, control panels, and other equipment to provide greater public access to the legislature through television broadcasts of legislative proceedings.

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the legislature for the purposes of this part.

PART III. EQUIPMENT FOR NEIGHBOR ISLAND PUBLIC ACCESS

SECTION 8. The state and federal governments have realized the importance of public access community television by mandating that a portion of the revenues generated by local cable companies support public, educational, and governmental programming. On Kauai, community television is provided by Ho‘ike Kauai; on Maui, by Akaku: Maui Community Television; and on Hawaii, by Na Leo ‘O Hawai‘i. These private, nonprofit organizations transmit, via stations provided by local cable companies, programming that includes proceedings of the legislature. Unfortunately, current technology requires that legislative proceedings be broadcast from Oahu to the neighbor islands at times when few residents are able to view them, such as late nights or early mornings. Improving the public access organizations’ equipment would permit them to tape these broadcasts, and replay them in prime time slots when viewership is greater.

SECTION 9. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$62,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 1995–1996, for grants-in-aid to purchase taping and other equipment needed for rebroadcasting state legislative programming as follows:

Ho‘ike Kauai	\$18,500
Akaku: Maui Community Television.....	\$16,800
Na Leo ‘O Hawai‘i	\$26,700

The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of commerce and consumer affairs for the purposes of this part.

SECTION 10. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 11. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 1995, except that section 6 shall take effect on June 29, 1995.

(Approved June 27, 1995.)