



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I

TESTIMONY

SCR 172: Urging the University of Hawai'i To Hold Hearings And Report On The University Affiliated Research Center Designation By The Navy, Applied Research Laboratory Proposal, Classified Research Policy And Their Relationship To The University's Mission And Strategic Plan

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Higher Education and
Senate Committee on Education & Military Affairs

April 13, 2005

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Peter Englert
Chancellor, University of Hawai'i at Manoa

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Chair Hee, Chair Sakamoto, and Members of their Committees:

Thank you for providing this opportunity to testify before you today on SCR 172. My name is Peter Englert, I am the Chancellor of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and I wish to testify in opposition to the resolution.

A University Affiliated Research Center (UARC) is a contracting vehicle that would allow UH researchers to directly propose projects to the Navy for funding or accept projects proposed by the Navy. The proposed UARC will provide support for our existing faculty in their existing Schools and Colleges to conduct research in the same areas they currently work in. It is important to recognize that it will be UH faculty researchers that are in the driver's seat and will determine what projects are proposed or accepted, and no faculty member or student would ever be forced to engage in any research project they did not wish to accept. The ease of this funding mechanism will allow faculty to accept or propose projects they would normally have to expend significant time and resources trying to procure.

There were 4 "core competencies" for which UH's programs were deemed to be excellent:

- (1) Fundamental and applied oceanographic research, including: marine life, mammals, bathymetry, autonomous underwater vehicles, acoustic mapping and littoral topography, buried mine detection, advanced sonar, and biosonar signal processing;
- (2) Astronomical research and development of world-class state-of-the-art optics and sensors;
- (3) Advanced electro optical systems, detectors, arrays and instrumentation; and
- (4) Fundamental research and applied engineering supporting improvements in the utilization of various regions of the electromagnetic spectrum, advancements in communications, networks and protocols, and signal processing.

Institutions with UARCs have strengthened their graduate programs, particularly in areas such as oceanography, atmospheric science, and engineering. The proposed UARC would also provide considerable revenue potential from this type of research that can be used to benefit the undergraduate and graduate missions, and the prestige of UARC status for our areas of core competency brings great honor to these already outstanding units and facilitates collaboration with other outstanding institutions. Finally, while we have 4 areas of excellence, we could work to establish more in the future, which could include UH's outstanding language training, cultural, and psychology programs.

A major concern I am hearing these days is what the oversight of the research projects entails, and how we ensure that we have learned the lessons of the past, protecting Hawai'i's land and citizens while we engage in scientific research. The University's word that we will conduct ourselves ethically and protect Hawai'i's resources is backed up in the University policies governing research. The proposed UARC contract vehicle and the research projects will follow the same policies that the University of Hawaii has developed over the years for our research enterprise. These regulations include Board of Regents policies, Executive policies, Federal policies, administrative procedures, human subjects policies, animal subjects policies, health and safety policies, and technology transfer policies. This includes the Executive Policy on Ethical Standards in Research and Scholarly Activities.

Like all other funding under current university policies, the UARC will have the capability to fund projects that are classified or have some classified component. This can be a challenge because in some cases classified research cannot be immediately published. To ensure that our faculty are not harmed by this it is the obligation of Department Heads and Deans to mentor young faculty so that they maintain a balanced and published research portfolio that leads them to promotion if they choose to engage in classified research of any sort, whether from the UARC or not. This is a similar situation to our faculty that chose to engage in consulting as a part of their professional portfolio.

The pursuit of UARC status is important for our pursuit of Mānoa's mission as a land grant and research university, as well as our own efforts to implement our Strategic Plan. Our status as a land grant institution obligates us to support research with specific applications. The first Morrill Act provided a land endowment for the "support, and maintenance of at least one college per state where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to lead such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts." These days, of course, we are doing much more at our university. But we still adhere to the land-grant principles that have guided us so well for almost a century. The Mānoa Strategic Plan's first tenant is that "Mānoa's Essence is Research," and specifically that we will "Support research initiatives where Mānoa is uniquely positioned to excel." and that we will "Expand applied research and scholarship." The proposed UARC does both of these things.

Finally, I would like to conclude that much of the information sought by SCR 172 is either currently available through my office or will be forthcoming through the consultation process the Board charged me to complete at the November meeting where they granted provisional approval of the proposed UARC. The information could be more promptly and accurately available by requesting that my office provide the report, which fits with what the Board of Regents has charged me to do.