HB 69
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
AN INVENTORY OF THE STATE’S OCEAN ENERGY RESOURCES
AND COASTAL AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT

House Committee on
Ocean and Marine Resources

Public Hearing - January 28, 1993
8:30 A.M., Room 1310 SOT

By
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HB 69 is intended to provide funding for development of an
inventory of the state’s ocean energy resources and coastal and
marine resources, under the leadership of the department of
business, economic development and tourism.

Our statement on this bill does not constitute an
institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

Clearly, efforts directed towards consolidation of centralized
databases on ocean energy resources are desirable. However, the
resources described in this bill seem somewhat inconsistent with
technologies having a high probability of success in Hawaii. For
instance, salinity gradient energy extraction systems are not
applicable locally at scales of utility significance, nor do tidal
systems offer a notable energy return. By contrast, thermal
energy, particularly OTEC technology is proven and widely
applicable at a variety of scales, yet is not mentioned here.
Furthermore, extensive work already has been completed on
evaluating the environmental impacts of OTEC installations, and
cost/benefit comparisons are readily accessible.

Clearly, consolidation of information on oil spill risk
profiles for Hawaii’s coastlines can provide valuable information,
particularly directed towards quantifying external environmental
costs of our continued prevalence of petroleum based energy
reliance. As these hidden costs increasingly are factored into
economic models of energy planning, alternative energy sources will
become substantially more attractive, providing added impetus for exploitation of renewable ocean energy resources.