

Union Calendar No. 301

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 4051

[Report No. 118–368]

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a task force regarding shark depredation, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 12, 2023

Mr. WITTMAN (for himself, Mr. SOTO, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, and Mr. VEASEY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

JANUARY 30, 2024

Additional sponsors: Mr. PAPPAS and Mr. WEBSTER of Florida

JANUARY 30, 2024

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on June 12, 2023]

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Commerce to establish a task force regarding shark depredation, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Supporting the Health*
 5 *of Aquatic systems through Research Knowledge and En-*
 6 *hanced Dialogue Act” or the “SHARKED Act”.*

7 **SEC. 2. SHARK DEPREDACTION TASK FORCE AND RESEARCH**
 8 **PROJECTS.**

9 *(a) SHARK DEPREDACTION TASK FORCE.—*

10 *(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce*
 11 *shall establish a task force (referred to in this sub-*
 12 *section as the “task force”) to identify and address*
 13 *critical needs with respect to shark depredation.*

14 *(2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary of Commerce*
 15 *shall appoint individuals to the task force, includ-*
 16 *ing—*

17 *(A) 1 representative from—*

18 *(i) each Regional Fishery Management*
 19 *Council established under section 302(a)(1)*
 20 *of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conserva-*
 21 *tion and Management Act (16 U.S.C.*
 22 *1852(a)(1));*

23 *(ii) each Marine Fisheries Commis-*
 24 *sion, as such term is defined in section 3 of*

1 *the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation*
2 *and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1802);*

3 *(iii) the fish and wildlife agency of a*
4 *coastal State from each Regional Fishery*
5 *Management Council established under sec-*
6 *tion 302(a)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens*
7 *Fishery Conservation and Management Act*
8 *(16 U.S.C. 1852(a)(1)); and*

9 *(iv) the National Marine Fisheries*
10 *Service;*

11 *(B) an individual with expertise in the*
12 *management of highly migratory species;*

13 *(C) a researcher with expertise in shark*
14 *management and behavior; and*

15 *(D) a researcher with expertise in shark*
16 *ecology.*

17 *(3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The task force shall—*

18 *(A) develop ways to improve coordination*
19 *and communication across the fisheries manage-*
20 *ment community and shark research community*
21 *to address shark depredation;*

22 *(B) identify research priorities and funding*
23 *opportunities for such priorities, including—*

24 *(i) identifying shark species involved*
25 *in interactions;*

1 (ii) shark stock assessments;

2 (iii) how sharks become habituated to
3 humans and thus lead to more interactions
4 between sharks and humans;

5 (iv) how angler behavior and fishery
6 regulatory frameworks may influence shark
7 interactions;

8 (v) techniques and strategies to reduce
9 harmful interactions between sharks and
10 humans, including the development and use
11 of non-lethal deterrents;

12 (vi) the role of healthy shark popu-
13 lations in the ocean food web; and

14 (vii) climate change impacts on shift-
15 ing shark populations, prey, and shark be-
16 havior;

17 (C) develop recommended management
18 strategies to address shark depredation; and

19 (D) coordinate the development and dis-
20 tribution of educational materials to help the
21 fishing community minimize shark interactions
22 including through changed angler behavior and
23 expectations.

24 (4) *REPORT.*—Not later than 2 years after the
25 date of the enactment of this section, and every 2

1 *years thereafter until the termination of the task force*
2 *in accordance with paragraph (5), the task force shall*
3 *submit to Congress a report regarding the findings of*
4 *the task force.*

5 (5) *SUNSET.—The task force shall terminate not*
6 *later than 7 years after the date on which the Sec-*
7 *retary of Commerce establishes the task force.*

8 (6) *COASTAL STATE DEFINED.—In this sub-*
9 *section, the term “coastal State”—*

10 (A) *means a State of the United States in,*
11 *or bordering on, the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific*
12 *Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, or Long Is-*
13 *land Sound; and*

14 (B) *includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands*
15 *of the United States, Guam, the Commonwealth*
16 *of the Northern Mariana Islands, and American*
17 *Samoa.*

18 (b) *SHARK DEPREDATION RESEARCH PROJECTS.—*
19 *Section 318(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conserva-*
20 *tion and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1867(c)) is amended*
21 *by adding at the end the following:*

22 “(6) *Projects to better understand shark depreda-*
23 *tion, including identifying what causes increases in*
24 *shark depredation and determining how to best ad-*
25 *dress shark depredation.”.*

1 (c) *EFFECT.*—*Nothing in this Act shall be construed*
2 *to affect the authority and responsibility of the Secretary*
3 *of Commerce in carrying out the Endangered Species Act*
4 *of 1973 or the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and*
5 *Management Act.*

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