

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 207

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2025

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

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 of 2025” or the “SHARKED Act
7 of 2025”.

8 **SEC. 2. SHARK DEPREDATION TASK FORCE AND RESEARCH**
9 **PROJECTS.**

10 (a) SHARK DEPREDATION TASK FORCE.—

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

5 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary of Com-
6 merce shall appoint individuals to the task force, in-
7 cluding—

8 (A) 1 representative from—

9 (i) each Regional Fishery Manage-
10 ment Council established under section
11 302(a)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fish-
12 ery Conservation and Management Act (16
13 U.S.C. 1852(a)(1));

14 (ii) each Marine Fisheries Commis-
15 sion, as such term is defined in section 3
16 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Con-
17 servation and Management Act (16 U.S.C.
18 1802);

19 (iii) the fish and wildlife agency of a
20 coastal State from each Regional Fishery
21 Management Council established under
22 section 302(a)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens
23 Fishery Conservation and Management Act
24 (16 U.S.C. 1852(a)(1)); and

1 (iv) the National Marine Fisheries
2 Service;

3 (B) an individual with expertise in the
4 management of highly migratory species;

5 (C) a researcher with expertise in shark
6 management and behavior; and

7 (D) a researcher with expertise in shark
8 ecology.

9 (3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The task force shall—

10 (A) develop ways to improve coordination
11 and communication across the fisheries man-
12 agement community and shark research com-
13 munity to address shark depredation;

14 (B) identify research priorities and funding
15 opportunities for such priorities, including—

16 (i) identifying shark species involved
17 in interactions;

18 (ii) shark stock assessments;

19 (iii) how sharks become habituated to
20 humans and thus lead to more interactions
21 between sharks and humans;

22 (iv) how angler behavior and fishery
23 regulatory frameworks may influence shark
24 interactions;

1 (v) techniques and strategies to re-
2 duce harmful interactions between sharks
3 and humans, including the development
4 and use of non-lethal deterrents;

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

7 (vii) climate change impacts on shift-
8 ing shark populations, prey, and shark be-
9 havior;

10 (C) develop recommended management
11 strategies to address shark depredation; and

12 (D) coordinate the development and dis-
13 tribution of educational materials to help the
14 fishing community minimize shark interactions
15 including through changed angler behavior and
16 expectations.

17 (4) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
18 date of the enactment of this section, and every 2
19 years thereafter until the termination of the task
20 force in accordance with paragraph (5), the task
21 force shall submit to Congress a report regarding
22 the findings of the task force.

23 (5) SUNSET.—The task force shall terminate
24 not later than 7 years after the date on which the
25 Secretary of Commerce establishes the task force.

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

3 (A) means a State of the United States in,
4 or bordering on, the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific
5 Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, or Long
6 Island Sound; and

7 (B) includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
8 lands of the United States, Guam, the Com-
9 monwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,
10 and American Samoa.

11 (b) SHARK DEPREDATION RESEARCH PROJECTS.—
12 Section 318(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Con-
13 servation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1867(c)) is
14 amended by adding at the end the following:

15 “(6) Projects to better understand shark depre-
16 dation, including identifying what causes increases
17 in shark depredation and determining how to best
18 address shark depredation.”.

19 (c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section shall be con-
20 strued to affect the authority and responsibility of the Sec-
21 retary of Commerce in carrying out the Endangered Spe-
22 cies Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1351 et seq.) or the Magnu-
23 son-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
24 (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

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