

FLORIDA SAFE SEAS ACT OF 2025

MAY 20, 2026.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WESTERMAN, from the Committee on Natural Resources,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.R. 3831]

The Committee on Natural Resources, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 3831) to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit feeding sharks in the exclusive economic zone off the State of Florida, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon without amendment and recommends that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF THE LEGISLATION

The purpose of H.R. 3831 is to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit feeding sharks in the exclusive economic zone off the State of Florida.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

In recent years, shark populations have risen in Florida and much of the United States.¹ This increase is in part due to the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-263), which prohibits the buying, selling, or transportation of any product containing shark fins.² While not imposing an outright ban, this statute creates significant difficulties for commercial fishermen, as the fins are often the most commercially valuable part of a shark.

H.R. 3831 amends the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit shark feeding in the exclusive economic zone off the State of Florida. This legislation aligns federal law with Florida's state regulations, which provide that "feeding fish, sharks, or other marine species while diving or snorkeling is

¹Laurie Mermet, "Hooked and stolen: How rebounding shark populations are changing Florida's fishing," University Press, Florida Atlantic University, April 25, 2025, <https://www.upressonline.com/2025/04/hooked-and-stolen-how-rebounding-shark-populations-are-changing-floridas-fishing/>.

²P.L. 117-263, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/PLAW-117publ263/html/PLAW-117publ263.htm>.

prohibited.”³ Florida developed these regulations to protect divers, surfers, and swimmers; to prevent the feeding of marine species in multiple-use areas; and to avoid training sharks to associate human activities with food.⁴ H.R. 3831 would enable safer recreational use of our coastal resources and provide needed relief to Florida’s commercial and recreational fishermen, who have seen an increase in shark depredation in recent years.

COMMITTEE ACTION

H.R. 3831 was introduced on June 6, 2025, by Representative Daniel Webster (R–FL–11). The bill was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and within the Committee to the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. On July 22, 2025, the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held a hearing on the bill. On March 5, 2026, the Committee on Natural Resources met to consider the bill. The Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries was discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3831 by unanimous consent. The bill was ordered favorably reported to the House of Representatives by unanimous consent.

HEARINGS

For the purposes of clause 3(c)(6) of House rule XIII, the following hearing was used to develop or consider this measure: hearing by the Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries held on July 22, 2025.

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

Section 1 names the bill the “Florida Safe Seas Act of 2025”.

Section 2. Prohibition on feeding sharks in exclusive economic zone off state of Florida

Section 2 amends Section 317 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit shark feeding in the exclusive economic zone off the state of Florida.

COMMITTEE OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Regarding clause 2(b)(1) of rule X and clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources’ oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XIII AND CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET ACT

1. *Cost of Legislation and the Congressional Budget Act.* Pursuant to clause 3(c)(2) of House rule XIII and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, and pursuant to clause 3(c)(3) of House rule XIII and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the Committee has requested but not received from the Di-

³“Feeding sharks and other fish,” Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, <https://myfwc.com/fishing/saltwater/recreational/fish-feeding/>.

⁴*Id.*

rector of the Congressional Budget Office a budgetary analysis and a cost estimate of this bill.

2. *General Performance Goals and Objectives.* As required by clause 3(c)(4) of Rule XIII, the general performance goal or objective of this bill is to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to prohibit feeding sharks in the exclusive economic zone off the State of Florida.

EARMARK STATEMENT

This bill does not contain any Congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined under clause 9(e), 9(f), and 9(g) of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

UNFUNDED MANDATES REFORM ACT STATEMENT

An estimate of federal mandates prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office pursuant to section 423 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chair of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the Congressional Record upon its receipt by the Committee, if such estimate is not publicly available on the Congressional Budget Office website.

EXISTING PROGRAMS

Directed Rule Making. This bill does not contain any directed rule makings.

Duplication of Existing Programs. This bill does not establish or reauthorize a program of the federal government known to be duplicative of another program. Such program was not included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139 or identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance published pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act (Public Law 95–220, as amended by Public Law 98–169) as relating to other programs.

APPLICABILITY TO LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of the Congressional Accountability Act.

PREEMPTION OF STATE, LOCAL OR TRIBAL LAW

Any preemptive effect of this bill over state, local, or tribal law is intended to be consistent with the bill's purposes and text and the Supremacy Clause of Article VI of the U.S. Constitution.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

**MAGNUSON-STEVENSON FISHERY CONSERVATION AND
MANAGEMENT ACT**

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**TITLE III—NATIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT
PROGRAM**

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SEC. 317. SHARK FEEDING.

Except to the extent determined by the Secretary, or under State law, as presenting no public health hazard or safety risk, or when conducted as part of a research program funded in whole or in part by appropriated funds, it is unlawful to introduce, or attempt to introduce, food or any other substance into the water to attract sharks for any purpose other than to harvest sharks within the Exclusive Economic Zone seaward of **the State** *the States* of Hawaii *and Florida* and of the Commonwealths, territories, and possessions of the United States in the Pacific Ocean Area.

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