

U.S. House Passes Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, November 20, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Building on prior efforts to protect sharks from being butchered on the high seas, the U.S. House passed the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act, H.R. 737, led by U.S. Reps. Gregorio Sablan (D-NM) and [Michael McCaul](#) (R-TX), to prohibit the import, export, possession, trade, and distribution of shark fins or products containing shark fins. U.S. Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Shelly Moore Capito (R-WV) also introduced a companion bill that the Senate Commerce Committee has already approved.



Shark Finning

"We shouldn't kill elephants for their ivory, rhinos for their horns, or sharks for their fins," said Wayne Pacelle, founder of Animal Wellness Action. "It is wasteful and barbaric, it imperils species and ecosystem health, and it degrades marine-based ecotourism and shark-diving experiences throughout the world."

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"Today, the House has finally moved to get our country out of the devastating shark fin trade by advancing the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act," said Del. Gregorio Sablan (D-NM). "I thank my colleagues from both sides of the aisle and especially my good friend, Rep. Michael McCaul of Texas, for working tirelessly with me on the bill. Our legislation is an effective, no-cost way to remove the United States from the harmful shark fin trade that contributes to the loss of up to 73 million sharks each year."

Three territories and a dozen states already have a ban in their laws. It's high time the House has joined them, and it is my hope the Senate quickly acts so we can end our contribution to the global trade of shark fins.

"Today, Congress struck down animal cruelty by voting in favor of the Shark Fin Sales Elimination Act. After sharks are captured, fisherman will remove their fins and release them back into the ocean to die," said U.S. Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX). "Sharks play a vital role in our marine ecosystem, serving as an indicator of the overall health of our ocean. The survival of these majestic creatures is of great importance and this bill will help ensure they are around for decades to come. I am proud to work alongside colleagues who have taken a stand against this atrocity today."

As many as 73 million sharks, according to some estimates, are finned annually across the globe. The shark killers cut off the fins, typically while the creature is alive and often throw the mutilated animal back into the ocean to suffer and die. Reckless and unsustainable killing of

these apex predators imperils species and degrades and destabilizes ocean ecosystems. Because of shark finning and other human-caused forms of mortality, shark death rates among some species exceeding birth and survivorship rates by as much as 30 percent.

The act of shark finning and possession of shark fins aboard a vessel is currently prohibited in U.S. waters under the 2010 Shark Conservation Act, but the law does not stop the domestic trade in their parts. In the U.S., shark fins derived from cruel fishing practices around the world are sold here.

The Animal Wellness Foundation (Foundation) is a Los Angeles-based private charitable organization with a mission of helping animals by making veterinary care available to everyone with a pet, regardless of economic ability. We organize rescue efforts and medical services for dogs and cats in need and help homeless pets find a loving caregiver. We are advocates for getting veterinarians to the front lines of the animal welfare movement; promoting responsible pet ownership; and vaccinating animals against infectious diseases such as distemper. We also support policies that prevent animal cruelty and that alleviate suffering. We believe helping animals helps us all.

Animal Wellness Action (Action) is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) organization with a mission of helping animals by promoting legal standards forbidding cruelty. We champion causes that alleviate the suffering of companion animals, farm animals, and wildlife. We advocate for policies to stop dogfighting and cockfighting and other forms of malicious cruelty and to confront factory farming and other systemic forms of animal exploitation. To prevent cruelty, we promote enacting good public policies and we work to enforce those policies. To enact good laws, we must elect good lawmakers, and that's why we remind voters which candidates care about our issues and which ones don't. We believe helping animals helps us all.

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