

## Union Calendar No.

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 4051

[Report No. 118-]

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

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### 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

SEPTEMBER --, 2023

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 italic]

[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.*