

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5688

C 324 L 11
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning shark finning activities.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Marine Waters (originally sponsored by Senators Ranker, Swecker, Rockefeller, Litzow, Shin and Kline).

Senate Committee on Natural Resources & Marine Waters
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

Background: Shark Finning Defined. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration explains shark finning as the practice of cutting off a shark's fins and returning the remainder of the shark to the water.

Current Shark Finning Prohibitions. Currently, rules of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) make it illegal to fin a shark in state waters. A commercial fisher must retain the entire shark in order to retain a fin. Once a shark has been delivered to a dealer and the sale recorded on a fish ticket, the shark fin may be dealt with separately from the carcass.

The practice of shark finning is also prohibited under federal law.

Summary: Creates the Crime of Unlawful Trade in Shark Fins. A person is guilty of unlawful shark trade in the second degree if that person (1) offers to or does buy, sell, or otherwise exchange a shark fin or derivative product for commercial purposes; or (2) prepares or processes a shark fin or derivative product for human or animal consumption for commercial purposes. A violation constitutes a gross misdemeanor, and triggers suspension of commercial fishing privileges for one year.

A person is guilty of a violation in the first degree if the violation (1) involves shark fins or a derivative product worth more than \$250; (2) is committed with knowledge the shark was illegally caught; or (3) is committed within five years of a conviction of this or other specified fish and wildlife crimes. A violation constitutes a class C felony, and triggers suspension of commercial fishing privileges for one year.

Provides Certain Exemptions. A person may conduct scientific or educational activities under a DFW permit without being liable for unlawful trade in shark fins. Additionally a person may exchange, prepare, or process for commercial purposes shark fins or derivative products lawfully caught or acquired before the act takes effect.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

An intent section is included, and terms are defined.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0	
House	95	1	(House amended)
Senate	47	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 22, 2011.