
**Agriculture & Natural Resources
Committee**

SB 5081

Brief Description: Regarding unlawful trade in shark fins.

Sponsors: Senators Ranker, Litzow, Shin, Kline, Keiser and Frockt.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the exemption allowing a person to offer to or sell, purchase, or otherwise exchange for commercial purposes shark fins or derivative products lawfully caught or acquired before July 22, 2011.

Hearing Date: 3/28/13

Staff: Cherlyn Walden (786-7296).

Background:

Unlawful Trade in Shark Fins.

A person commits the crime of unlawful trade in shark fins if that person: offers to or does sell, purchase, or otherwise exchange a shark fin or derivative product for commercial purposes; or prepares or processes a shark fin or derivative product for human or animal consumption for commercial purposes.

A violation is generally a gross misdemeanor and triggers suspension of commercial fishing privileges for one year. However, the violation is a class C felony if the violation involves product with a market value exceeding \$250, the person acted with knowledge that the shark was harvested unlawfully, or occurs within five years of a prior commercial fishing violation classified as a gross misdemeanor or felony.

Exemptions.

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.

There are two exemptions to the crime of unlawful trade in shark fins. First, a person may take, possess, sell, or purchase sharks or shark parts to conduct research or education activities under a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife permit without being liable for unlawful trade in shark fins. Second, a person is not liable for the unlawful trade in shark fins for the offer to or sell, purchase, or otherwise exchange for commercial purposes of shark fins or derivative products lawfully harvested or acquired before July 22, 2011.

Summary of Bill:

The exemption that allows a person to offer to or sell, purchase, or otherwise exchange for commercial purposes of shark fins or derivative products lawfully harvested or acquired before July 22, 2011 is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.