



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1311-2012, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1311

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to enact and the Governor to sign A. 7707A-2011 and S. 6431-2011, which would prohibit the possession, sale, offer for sale, trade, or distribution of shark fins.

By Council Members Chin, Brewer, Comrie, James, Koo, Koppell, Lander, Palma, Vann, Williams, Wills, Dromm, Rose, Jackson, Lappin and Mark-Viverito

Whereas, Shark fin soup is considered a delicacy in parts of the world and is often served at weddings and other celebrations; and

Whereas, Approximately 73 million sharks are harvested every year for their fins, many of which are caught, have their fins removed, and are returned dead or dying back into the water, in a practice known as “finning”; and

Whereas, Experts and advocates believe that such harvesting has a major impact on the decline of shark populations, to the extent that the International Union for Conservation of Nature, a highly-respected organization that tracks the conservation status of species around globe, recently determined that or 32% of all pelagic (open ocean) shark and ray species are threatened, while another 24% are near threatened, in part due to harvesting for shark fin soup; and

Whereas, Sharks are often apex predators, existing at the top of the food chain, and healthy populations of apex predators help maintain the overall health of ecosystems, whereas threatened or endangered apex predator populations can indicate unhealthy or failing ecosystems; and

Whereas, The Shark Finning Prohibition Act (SFPA) of 2000 banned finning in United States waters by vessels registered in the United States, and, after a federal appeals court ruled that SFPA did not prohibit the at-sea transfer of shark fins, in 2010 the Shark Conservation Act was passed to close that loophole; and

Whereas, Four states, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington, have restricted the trade of shark fins; and

Whereas, According to media reports, the consumption of shark fin soup, especially in younger demographics, is declining, and there are replacement ingredients available; and

Whereas, A ban on the trade and sale of shark fins in New York would help conserve sharks and would help educate the broader public about the need to conserve these critical members of our ocean habitats; and

Whereas, A. 7707A-2011 and S. 6431-2011, if enacted, would ban “finning” in the waters of the State’s marine and coastal zone; ban selling, possessing, offering for sale, trading or distributing shark fins, except for permitted scientific purposes; and give the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation the authority to regulate shark fisheries in a broad array of areas; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to enact and the Governor to sign A. 7707A-2011 and S. 6431-2011, which would prohibit the possession, sale, offer for sale, trade, or distribution of shark fins.

DAA
LS 3432/2012