

THE COMMITTEE ON ANIMALS AND THE LAW URGES APPROVAL OF THIS LEGISLATION

Animals and the Law #7 - GOV

July 25, 2013

S. 1711-B
A. 1869-B

By: Senator Grisanti
By: M. of A. Maisel
Senate Committee: Environmental Conservation
Assembly Committee: Environmental Conservation
Effective Date: July 1, 2014

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prohibiting the possession, sale, offer for sale, trade or distribution of shark fins.

SECTION AND LAW REFERRED TO: Section 13-0338 of the Environmental Conservation Law.

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This bill would amend the Environmental Conservation Law to expand the prohibition against “finning” to include a prohibition against the possession, sale, offer for sale, trade or distribution of shark fins.

Each year, approximately 73 million sharks are killed for their fins. Not only is the practice inhumane, as the sharks are thrown back into the water, sink and ultimately drown (unless they first starve to death or are eaten alive by other fish), this rate of death is decimating the shark population worldwide, leaving them unable to repopulate in the normal course. Since New York is a major point of entry and distribution for shark fins on the East Coast of the United States, action must be taken here against this cruel and ecologically devastating practice.

When a shark is caught purely for its fin, the majority of the shark is wasted. After removal of the fin, it is thrown back into the water where it can no longer swim, sinks to the bottom of the ocean and oftentimes dies from drowning (which is both a slow and painful death).

Various studies have estimated that there are approximately 90% fewer sharks today than there were in 1970 and that certain species are on the verge of extinction. As part of the larger ecosystem, the dramatic decline in the number of sharks has negatively impacted other marine life as well.

Opinions expressed are those of the Section/Committee preparing this memorandum and do not represent those of the New York State Bar Association unless and until they have been adopted by its House of Delegates or Executive Committee.

While it is already illegal to fin a shark in New York, this bill would provide that no person may possess, sell, offer for sale, trade or distribute a shark fin. Similar legislation has passed in California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii and Toronto. It is time for New York to take a stand on this important issue.

Based on the foregoing, the Committee on Animals and the Law **URGES APPROVAL** of this legislation by the Governor.

Chair of the Committee: Amy L. Chaitoff, Esq.