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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. WITTMAN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

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 of 2025” or the “SHARKED Act
7 of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. SHARK DEPREDAATION TASK FORCE AND RESEARCH**
2 **PROJECTS.**

3 (a) SHARK DEPREDAATION TASK FORCE.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Commerce
5 shall establish a task force (referred to in this sub-
6 section as the “task force”) to identify and address
7 critical needs with respect to shark depredation.

8 (2) MEMBERSHIP.—The Secretary of Com-
9 merce shall appoint individuals to the task force, in-
10 cluding—

11 (A) 1 representative from—

12 (i) each Regional Fishery Manage-
13 ment Council established under section
14 302(a)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fish-
15 ery Conservation and Management Act (16
16 U.S.C. 1852(a)(1));

17 (ii) each Marine Fisheries Commis-
18 sion, as such term is defined in section 3
19 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Con-
20 servation and Management Act (16 U.S.C.
21 1802);

22 (iii) the fish and wildlife agency of a
23 coastal State from each Regional Fishery
24 Management Council established under
25 section 302(a)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens

1 Fishery Conservation and Management Act
2 (16 U.S.C. 1852(a)(1)); and

3 (iv) the National Marine Fisheries
4 Service;

5 (B) an individual with expertise in the
6 management of highly migratory species;

7 (C) a researcher with expertise in shark
8 management and behavior; and

9 (D) a researcher with expertise in shark
10 ecology.

11 (3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The task force shall—

12 (A) develop ways to improve coordination
13 and communication across the fisheries man-
14 agement community and shark research com-
15 munity to address shark depredation;

16 (B) identify research priorities and funding
17 opportunities for such priorities, including—

18 (i) identifying shark species involved
19 in interactions;

20 (ii) shark stock assessments;

21 (iii) how sharks become habituated to
22 humans and thus lead to more interactions
23 between sharks and humans;

1 (iv) how angler behavior and fishery
2 regulatory frameworks may influence shark
3 interactions;

4 (v) techniques and strategies to re-
5 duce harmful interactions between sharks
6 and humans, including the development
7 and use of non-lethal deterrents;

8 (vi) the role of healthy shark popu-
9 lations in the ocean food web; and

10 (vii) climate change impacts on shift-
11 ing shark populations, prey, and shark be-
12 havior;

13 (C) develop recommended management
14 strategies to address shark depredation; and

15 (D) coordinate the development and dis-
16 tribution of educational materials to help the
17 fishing community minimize shark interactions
18 including through changed angler behavior and
19 expectations.

20 (4) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the
21 date of the enactment of this section, and every 2
22 years thereafter until the termination of the task
23 force in accordance with paragraph (5), the task
24 force shall submit to Congress a report regarding
25 the findings of the task force.

1 (5) SUNSET.—The task force shall terminate
2 not later than 7 years after the date on which the
3 Secretary of Commerce establishes the task force.

4 (6) COASTAL STATE DEFINED.—In this sub-
5 section, the term “coastal State”—

6 (A) means a State of the United States in,
7 or bordering on, the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific
8 Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, or Long
9 Island Sound; and

10 (B) includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Is-
11 lands of the United States, Guam, the Com-
12 monwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,
13 and American Samoa.

14 (b) SHARK DEPREDATION RESEARCH PROJECTS.—
15 Section 318(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Con-
16 servation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1867(c)) is
17 amended by adding at the end the following:

18 “(6) Projects to better understand shark depre-
19 dation, including identifying what causes increases
20 in shark depredation and determining how to best
21 address shark depredation.”.

22 (c) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section shall be con-
23 strued to affect the authority and responsibility of the Sec-
24 retary of Commerce in carrying out the Endangered Spe-
25 cies Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1351 et seq.) or the Magnu-

1 son-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
2 (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).