REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO POST SIGNS INFORMING THE PUBLIC OF THE ILLEGALITY OF SHARK FEEDING AND TO AMEND ITS ADMINISTRATIVE RULES TO ENFORCE COMPLIANCE WITH SHARK FEEDING LAWS.

WHEREAS, sharks, called "mano" in the Hawaiian language, carry great cultural, historical, and spiritual significance for many native Hawaiians, native Hawaiian practitioners, and others who value the Hawaiian culture; and

WHEREAS, sharks are revered and regarded by many native Hawaiians as their "'aumakua," a protective ancestral spirit; and

WHEREAS, shark tours, the practice of charging customers to venture into the ocean to view sharks, routinely and continuously feed sharks and use attractants to attract and hold many sharks near their operational sites; and

WHEREAS, a recent study concluded that illegal shark feeding by the tour operators has caused larger sharks, specifically the galapagos and tiger sharks, to displace the smaller sharks from the cage diving sites; and

WHEREAS, ocean users near the shark feeding sites have reported increased sightings of, and interactions with sharks since illegal shark feeding began; and

WHEREAS, lifeguards have reported increased shark sightings in the surf-line, a Coast Guard search and rescue crew reported very large sharks below an overturned boat, and boaters, along with Honolulu Fire Department crews, reported numerous shark sightings while conducting search and rescue operations; and

WHEREAS, although prohibited by both state and federal law, commercial shark tour operators continue to feed sharks; and
WHEREAS, the illegal use of food and other attractants by commercial shark tour operators raises concerns over the health, safety, and welfare of ocean users, is disruptive to the ocean's ecology and natural environment, and disrespectful of native Hawaiian customs, beliefs, and practitioners; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, that this body requests the Department of Land and Natural Resources to post signs informing the public of the illegality of shark feeding and to amend its administrative rules to enforce compliance with shark feeding laws; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body requests the owners and operators of commercial shark tours in the State to comply with state and federal law by immediately ceasing all shark feeding activities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Land and Natural Resources is requested to monitor commercial shark tour operations in the State to ensure compliance with state law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the Board of Land and Natural Resources, the Director of the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, who in turn is requested to send additional copies to the registered agents of Hawaii Shark Encounters Inc., North Shore Shark Adventures Inc., Hawaii Shark Discovery LLC, and Pacific Paradise Divers Inc.

OFFERED BY:

[Signatures]

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