
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF SHARKS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that sharks, known as
2 māno in the Hawaiian language, are extremely important to ocean
3 ecosystems. As ocean predators near the top of the food chain,
4 sharks keep the ecosystem balanced, regulate populations of
5 other marine life, and ensure healthy fish stock and reefs.

6 The legislature further finds that there have been numerous
7 incidents reported where young sharks, such as hammerhead shark
8 pups, are killed by being entangled in gill nets set in shark
9 nursery habitats. The legislature also finds that prohibiting
10 the placement of gill nets in areas determined to be shark
11 nursery habitats would be an effective tool to protect shark
12 populations.

13 The purpose of this Act is to protect sharks for their
14 ecological value while not criminalizing the accidental capture
15 and release of sharks that may be captured while fishing for
16 other species as allowed by statute or rule.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 188, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to be appropriately designated
3 and to read as follows:

4 "§188- Sharks; mano; prohibitions; exceptions; penalties
5 and fines. (a) Except as provided in subsection (f), or as
6 otherwise provided by law, no person shall intentionally or
7 knowingly capture or entangle any shark, whether alive or dead,
8 or kill any shark, within state marine waters.

9 (b) Any person violating this section or any rule adopted
10 pursuant to this section shall be guilty of a misdemeanor;
11 provided that the fine for violating this section shall be:

- 12 (1) \$500 for a first offense;
- 13 (2) \$2,000 for a second offense; and
- 14 (3) \$10,000 for a third or subsequent offense.

15 (c) A person convicted of violating this section may be
16 sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000 per offense.

17 (d) In addition to any other penalty imposed under this
18 section, a person violating this section shall be subject to:

- 19 (1) An administrative fine of no more than \$10,000 for
20 each shark captured or entangled, whether alive or
21 dead, or killed in violation of this section;



- 1 (2) Seizure and forfeiture of any captured sharks or any
2 part or product therefrom, commercial marine license,
3 vessel, and fishing equipment; and
- 4 (3) Assessment of administrative fees and costs, and
5 attorney's fees and costs.
- 6 (e) The criminal penalties and administrative fines, fees,
7 and costs shall be assessed per shark captured or entangled,
8 whether dead or alive, or killed in violation of this section.
- 9 (f) This section shall not apply to:
- 10 (1) Special activity permits issued under section 187A-6;
- 11 (2) The department of land and natural resources or its
12 designated agent if the capture or entanglement,
13 whether alive or dead, or killing is for the
14 protection of public safety;
- 15 (3) Sharks taken outside of state marine waters and
16 possessed on a vessel in state marine waters pursuant
17 to any federally managed fishery, with the required
18 documentation of the location where the capture
19 occurred; and
- 20 (4) Any person if the capture or entanglement, whether
21 alive or dead, or killing is the result of self



1 defense, or the defense of another, against death or
2 bodily harm.

3 (g) Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict
4 the exercise of traditional and customary rights protected
5 pursuant to article XII, section 7, of the Hawaii State
6 Constitution.

7 (h) The department of land and natural resources may adopt
8 rules pursuant to chapter 91 to implement this section for
9 purposes including but not limited to:

10 (1) Ensuring that the incidental capture and release of
11 sharks while targeting other species is not a
12 violation;

13 (2) Preventing the wanton waste of sharks; and

14 (3) Limiting gear, such as gill nets, in areas identified
15 as shark nursery habitats.

16 (i) For the purposes of this section, "shark" means any
17 species of shark within the subclass Elasmobranchii."

18 SECTION 3. Section 188-70, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
19 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

20 "(a) Any person violating any provision of or any rule
21 adopted pursuant to this chapter, except sections 188-23 [~~and~~],



1 188-39.5, and 188- , is guilty of a petty misdemeanor and, in
2 addition to any other penalties, shall be fined [~~not~~] no less
3 than:

- 4 (1) \$100 for a first offense;
- 5 (2) \$200 for a second offense; and
- 6 (3) \$500 for a third or subsequent offense."

7 SECTION 4. This Act does not affect rights and duties that
8 matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were
9 begun before its effective date.

10 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
11 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

12 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2022.



Report Title:

Sharks; Prohibitions; Penalties; Exemptions

Description:

Establishes an offense of intentionally or knowingly capturing, entangling, or killing a shark in state marine waters, and provides penalties and fines. Provides certain exemptions. Allows the department of land and natural resources to establish rules. Effective 1/1/2022. (SD2)

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