

May 9, 2017

Dear Florida Congressional Delegation:

We, the undersigned scuba dive businesses in Florida, submit this letter urging Congress to support and pass the bipartisan Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act (S. 793/H.R. 1456). Shark populations, which are important to both ocean ecosystems as well as coastal tourism, are disappearing as a result of bycatch and overfishing, largely fueled by the demand for shark fins.

As businesses dependent upon healthy shark populations, we understand how important sharks are to ocean ecosystems and our coastal communities. Shark tourism is a booming industry; shark-related dives in Florida alone generated more than \$221 million in revenue in 2016. This stands in contrast with the entire U.S. shark fin market, which exported just around \$1 million in the year 2015. Researchers anticipate further growth and estimate that the shark tourism industry could double in the next 20 years.

While the act of shark finning is illegal in U.S. waters, shark fins continue to be bought and sold throughout the United States. The demand for shark fins is one of the greatest threats facing shark populations around the world. Fins from up to 73 million sharks end up in the global shark fin trade every year in order to fuel the demand for shark fin soup. Of the 14 most common shark species involved in the fin trade, more than 70 percent are considered at high or very high risk of extinction.

Just as rhino and elephant populations have declined due to the demand for their horns and tusks, shark populations have declined due to the demand for their fins. The United States has banned the trade of rhino horns and ivory, but continues to allow the buying and selling of shark fins.

Congress should follow the lead of the 11 states (Texas, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island, California, and Washington) and three U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands) that have already stepped up to ban the trade of shark fin products. A number of companies have also banned the selling and shipment of shark fin products including GrubHub, Disney, Amazon, UPS, American Airlines and Hilton Worldwide.

A nationwide ban on the trade of shark fins would not only protect sharks, remove the United States from the global fin trade, and empower the United States to encourage other countries to do the same, but would also ensure that our dive businesses continue to thrive.

Sincerely,

The 101 Undersigned Floridian Dive Businesses

A Deep Blue Dive Center (Marathon)  
 Abyss Dive Center (Marathon)  
 Adventure Scuba Diving (North Miami)  
 Amy Slate's Amoray Dive Resort (Key Largo)  
 Aquatic Obsessions Dive (St. Petersburg)  
 Atlantic Pro Divers (Jacksonville Beach)  
 Atocha Dive Adventures (Key West)  
 Austin's Diving Center (Miami)  
 Bay and Reef Company (Islamorada)  
 Bay Breeze Dive Center (Gulf Breeze)  
 Big Time Charters (Mexico Beach)  
 Blue Iguana Charters (Key Largo)  
 Brownie's Yacht Diver (Fort Lauderdale)  
 Captain Hook's Dive Center and Marina (Marathon)  
 Captain Slate's Scuba Adventures (Tavernier)  
 Captains Corner (Key West)  
 Castaway Scuba (Orlando)  
 Conch Republic Divers (Tavernier)  
 Daly's Dock & Dive Center (Port St. Joe)  
 Depth Perception (Tampa)  
 Discover Diving Dive Center (Port Orange)  
 Dive Duck Key (Marathon)  
 Dive Key Largo (Key Largo)  
 Dive Key West (Marathon)  
 Dive Pros (Pensacola)  
 Divers Cove (Davie)  
 Divers Paradise of Biscayne Bay (Key Biscayne)  
 Dixie Divers of Palm Bay (Palm Bay)  
 Dolphin Sun Dive Charters (Boynton Beach)  
 Down Under Dive Shop (Pensacola)  
 Dr. Dive (Pensacola)  
 Fantasea Dive Shop (Port Charlotte)  
 Finz Dive Center (Key West)  
 Florida Keys Dive Center, Inc. (Tavernier)  
 Florida Keys Shark Diving (Marathon)  
 Florida Straits Diving (Key West)  
 Formula Free Diving (Marathon)  
 H2O Below (Pensacola)  
 Hall's Diving Center & Career Institute (Marathon)  
 History of Diving Museum (Islamorada)  
 HMS Minnow Charters (Key Largo)  
 Horizon Divers (Key Largo)  
 Islamorada Dive Center (Islamorada)  
 Island Ventures (Key Largo)  
 Jim Abernethy's Scuba Adventures (Lake Park)  
 Key Dives (Islamorada)  
 Key Largo Dive Center (Key Largo)  
 Key West Eco Tours, Inc. (Key West)  
 Key West Extreme Adventures (Key West)  
 Keys Diver (Key Largo)  
 Keys Huka Dive Charters (Key West)  
 Loggerhead Dive Charters (Boynton Beach)  
 Looe Key Reef Resort & Dive Center (Ramrod Key)  
 Lost Reef Adventures (Key West)  
 MBT Divers (Pensacola)  
 Miami SCUBA Ventures (Coconut Grove)  
 Narcosis Dive Charters (West Palm Beach)  
 Nautilus Spearfishing (Miami)  
 Niuhi Dive Charters (Pensacola)  
 Ocean Divers/Emocean Sports (Key Largo)  
 Ocean Safari Diving Adventures (Miami)  
 OEX Boat Charters (Pompano Beach)  
 Offshore Dive Charters (Jacksonville)  
 Panama City Dive Center (Panama City Beach)  
 Parrot Island Scuba Adventures (Pompano Beach)  
 Quiescence Diving Services, Inc. (Key Largo)  
 Rainbow Reef Dive Center (Key Largo)  
 Sail Fish Scuba (Key Largo)  
 Sarasota Scuba Club (Sarasota)  
 Scuba Haven (Tampa)  
 Scuba Monkey Dive Center (Alachua)  
 Scuba Quest (Various Cities)  
 Scuba School and Dive Center (Fort Lauderdale)  
 Scuba Tech (Destin)  
 Scuba Works (Jupiter)  
 Scuba World (Orlando)  
 Scuba-Fun (Key Largo)  
 Scubatyme Charters (Pompano Beach)  
 Sea Dogs Dive Center (New Smyrna Beach)  
 Sea Dwellers Dive Center of Key Largo (Key Largo)  
 Sea Experience (Fort Lauderdale)  
 Sea Hunt Scuba (St. Augustine)  
 Seahorse Scuba (Ft. Myers)  
 Silent World Dive Center (Key Largo)  
 Snuba of Key West (Key West)  
 South Florida Divers, Inc. (Hollywood)  
 Southpoint Divers (Key West)  
 Squalo Divers (Miami)  
 Strike Zone Charters (Big Pine Key)  
 Stuart Scuba (Stuart)  
 Sundivers Snorkeling Tour (Key Largo)  
 Sunshine Scuba (Tampa)  
 Tanks-A-Lot Dive Charters (Clearwater)  
 Tarpoon Lagoon (Miami Beach)  
 The Scuba Club (North Palm Beach)  
 Tilden's Scuba Center (Marathon)  
 Treasure Coast Charters (Vero Beach)  
 Underseas Dive Shop (Big Pine Key)  
 Viking Divers (Pensacola)  
 Vortex Spring (Ponce De Leon)  
 Y-Not Charters (Key West)