



June 23, 2016

The Honorable Cory Booker
359 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Booker,

We write today in strong support of the Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act of 2016, and to applaud you and the other cosponsoring Senators for your leadership in introducing this important legislation. The Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act would strengthen federal laws against the bloody and wasteful practice of shark finning and takes vital steps toward protecting sharks from cruelty as well as preserving our oceans' fragile ecosystems. While shark finning is already banned in the U.S., this bill would further discourage finning around the world by banning the commercial possession and trade of shark fins within our country. This is a mainstream, common-sense proposal that has already been embraced in eleven of our most-populated and diverse states, including Texas, California and New York.

Shark finning involves cutting off a shark's fins while the shark is alive and conscious, then discarding the critically injured animal to die. Upwards of 75 million sharks are killed for a mere five percent of their body weight every year; as a result, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species has estimated that a quarter of all shark species are threatened with extinction. Studies have shown that shark population declines affect the balance of marine ecosystems in alarming ways. For example, sharks' absence from the food chain is indirectly wiping out coral reefs that have grown for thousands of years around the world.

SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and the Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation would like to join your efforts to stop shark finning and its cascading effects on our global marine ecosystems. We are also working to educate the public about the urgent need for shark and ocean conservation, This has already begun at SeaWorld Orlando, where a redesigned Shark Wreck Reef area, anchored by the new Mako attraction, offers interactive educational experiences dedicated to shark conservation. Marine wildlife artist and conservationist Guy Harvey has partnered with SeaWorld to host these interactive experiences as well as contribute a portion of proceeds from related merchandise to scientific research and global ocean conservation efforts. To further this work, we pledge our combined

support to the Shark Fin Trade Elimination Act, and offer our assistance to educate lawmakers, as well as the public, about this cruel practice and about the positive impacts of a healthy shark population worldwide.

Again, we thank you and your cosponsors for your dedication to ending the brutal practice of shark finning and to protecting our oceans. As America celebrates Shark Week 2016, public policymakers and conservation organizations like ours have the opportunity to collaborate to reduce fear and misinformation about sharks while promoting the protection of shark species and habitats. We hope that you will consider us as resources and allies in the fight against finning.

Sincerely,



Joel Manby
President and Chief Executive Officer
SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment
9205 South Park Center Loop
Orlando, FL32819



Wayne Pacelle
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20037



Guy Harvey
Founder
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation
10408 West State Road 84, Suite 104
Davie, FL 33324