

Dear (Insert Restaurant/Store and name of general manager or owner if available),

I was recently in your establishment and decided not to support your business because I was disappointed to see you were selling (shark meat/shark fin soup/shark derived products/shark derived souvenirs.) Your buyer may be unaware that one-third of all large shark species are now threatened with extinction with most all documented shark populations facing declines as high as 90-95%. Due to the fact that sharks take years to reach maturity and naturally reproduce slowly, it takes a long time for them to recover from heavy fishing pressure. Scientific studies show that all around the world areas where sharks have been removed there has been a correlating crash in fish stocks and a degradation of the local reefs because sharks are a critical component to maintaining the health of the ocean that we all rely on for the air that we breathe, sustenance, products, and the environment as we know it. Sharks function as the immune system of the ocean, like the white blood cells they combat diseases by picking off dead, weak, or sick animals keeping lower trophic level populations healthy and in balance.

Currently over 100 million sharks are killed annually. There is a growing awareness among your customers as well as the general public about the threats sharks are facing and their importance. Eleven states in the US including Hawaii, Washington, California and Texas have banned the sale, possession and trade of shark fin products. Many species of sharks have been recognized as endangered species and given special protections due to their vulnerability by organizations such as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the United Nations, and the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES).

In addition to being grossly unsustainable, shark meat and shark fin soup are also a potential health hazard because they are high in toxins. Due to the fact that sharks are at the top of the food chain, apex predators tend to bioaccumulate heavy metals and toxins such as mercury, lead and BMAA that have been linked to neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's. Consumption of mercury even in small quantities can cause damage to the brain, digestive, and immune system. Consuming shark can be especially detrimental for children and pregnant women and can contribute to serious illness in any person over time.

As one of your potential customers I would like to request that you please stop selling shark products that are contributing to their decline. Please join the growing list of business that have demonstrated their commitment to the health and future of our community, the ocean, and sustainable practices for the environment by no longer selling (shark meat/shark fin soup/shark derived products/shark derived souvenirs.) Thank you for taking the time to consider this request.

I hope to hear back from you soon. For more information about the importance of sharks please check out the TED talk: "How sharks affect us all." by Ocean Ramsey or the website: <http://www.HelpSaveSharks.Org> for more information. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Insert your name and option to add your email address for response.)