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## **O'Donnell's Bill to Fund Research of Increased Shark Activity Moves Forward**

*Assembly Bill 2191 emphasizes need for funding for research of sharks along California coast*

**(Sacramento)** – Assembly Bill 2191 by Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell (D – Long Beach), passed the Assembly Water, Parks & Wildlife Committee Tuesday. The measure seeks funding for research of the increasing number of shark sightings along the California Coast.

“We are seeing sharks along our Long Beach coast today more than ever,” Assemblymember O'Donnell said. “As a parent and a teacher, our kids' safety is my top priority. AB 2191 is about educating ourselves so we can keep our kids safe. The more we know about the behavior of the sharks along our coastline, the better prepared we can be at the beach and in the water.”

Assemblymember O'Donnell recently partnered with California State University Long Beach's Shark Lab to hold “Shark Day,” a public informational event at the university. The event highlighted the Shark Lab's work monitoring and studying sharks, which would be eligible for funding through AB 2191.

CSULB's Shark Lab Director Dr. Chris Lowe, previously featured on the Discovery Channel's Shark Week, gave a special presentation at Shark Day and shared his expertise at the hearing for AB 2191.

“We are seeing unprecedented numbers of juvenile white sharks hanging out in the surfline alongside swimmers, surfers, paddleboarders and others who recreate in the ocean,” Dr. Lowe said. “This is prompting more sightings, warnings and closures at local beaches than in recent memory. While this is alarming for beachgoers, this influx -- coupled with better technology -- is a perfect opportunity for us to find out why these sharks are staying closer to shore for longer periods as they grow bigger. Unfortunately, we don't have the funding to keep pace with the demand for tags and monitoring. This is jeopardizing our efforts to learn about white shark behavior and help lifeguards and law enforcement better inform the public about beach safety.”

The bill now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

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*Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell represents the 70<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, which includes Long Beach, Signal Hill, San Pedro and Catalina Island.*