

Shark Tournaments Ban Protects Visitors

The article below was excerpted from the Port City Daily published on May 30.

A moratorium on shark fishing tournaments in several local beach towns has passed the General Assembly and signed into law by Gov. Roy Cooper.

Coastal towns in North Carolina have been pushing state representatives for the bill throughout the legislative session.

In April, Brunswick County commissioners approved a resolution supporting [House Bill 544](#), to prohibit taking sharks from the shoreline or a structure built on the shore, such as a pier, as part of a recreational fishing tournament from May 1-Oct. 31.

The law, put forth by [Rep. Charles Miller \(R-New Hanover/Brunswick\)](#), only applies to Carolina, Caswell, Holden, Kure, Oak Island and Bald Head Island beaches.

The bill follows Southport business owner Marty Wright's attempt to host a fishing tournament, and drop bait into the waters to funnel fish to the shore, along the Brunswick County coastline in June 2022.

The law will take effect July 1, 2023.

School Calendar Defiance Growing

The following article was excerpted from WFAE on June 6.

As the current school year winds down, the North Carolina Board of Education got its annual report on school calendars for the coming year.

It shows that 15 districts in a dozen counties, with a total of almost 177,000 students, have decided to ignore the state law that requires them to start classes "no earlier than the Monday closest to Aug. 26."

When state Board of Education Vice Chair Alan Duncan introduced the 2023 report last week, he pointed out that there's little the board can do about violations: "The only authority we would have...would be to send a letter reminding them of what the law states."

The Charlotte region remains at the forefront of the calendar rebellion: Cabarrus County, Gaston County, Iredell-Statesville, Lincoln County, Cleveland County, Stanly County, Rutherford County and Kannapolis are all starting classes between August 9 and 16

August 28 is the earliest start date allowed under the law this year. The Union County school board tried to join them but backed down in the face of a lawsuit the board clearly couldn't win.

Sports Wagering on Governor's Desk

[House Bill 347 \(Sports Wagering\)](#) passed the General Assembly on Wednesday and is now on Governor Roy Cooper's desk awaiting his signature, which he is expected to do within the next week. The final vote count [in the House was 69-44](#).

The bill sponsors are [Representatives Jason Saine \(R-Lincoln\)](#), [John Bell \(R-Wayne\)](#), [Zack Hawkins \(D-Durham\)](#), and [Ashton Clemmons \(D-Guilford\)](#).

The bill allows North Carolinians over the age of 21 to place bets online on professional, college, and amateur sports. Betting middle school athletics is disallowed under the bill. Revenue will go to the State General Fund and specific projects (mainly university athletics) listed in the legislation. The bill would go into effect on January 8, 2024.

