



## State Rep. Feigenholtz Moves To Ban Shark Fin Sales In Illinois

State Rep. Sara Feigenholtz has introduced legislation in Springfield that will make it illegal to sell shark fin in Illinois. [HB 4119](#), if passed, would institute the ban on the delicacy beginning in July 2013. Feigenholtz [told the Sun-Times](#),

“I have a very large, devoted-to-animal group in my district,” she said. “So this landed on my doorstep.” Finning—the practice of fishing for shark solely for the purpose of harvesting their fins, then tossing them back in the ocean—is a practice that is so common it was banned in the Pacific, [as we discovered talking to Bill “The Fish Guy” Dugan a few years back](#). But many Chinese consider shark fin a delicacy and you can find shark fin soup on a host of menus in Chinatown restaurant, and dried shark fin in Wentworth Avenue shops.

Shark can be fished for the meat, but the process is so detailed that more often they're poached for the fins. Feigenholtz told the Sun-Times she worked with the Illinois chapter of the Humane Society, which is leading efforts to effect stronger bans on finning.

Feigenholtz's proposed legislation [draws comparisons to Chicago's infamous and much-ballyhooed onetime ban on foie gras](#). Unlike the foie gras ban, which was fought vehemently by the local restaurant industry until it was repealed, Chinese restaurants that went on the record to the Sun-Times indicated that they may take shark fin soup off their menus altogether, citing its expensiveness and low nutritional value. Phoenix restaurant banquet manager Carol Cheung said shark fin soup is on her menu, but:

“You will get traditional, die-hard Chinese food enthusiasts that say, ‘I can’t have a banquet without having shark fins,’” Cheung said. “I can’t remember the last time I had someone order some from me.”