

**SUPPLEMENTAL  
COMMUNICATION**

**From:** [Dr. Heidi Sykora](mailto:Dr. Heidi Sykora)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for Kratom Education & Regulation Guidance  
**Date:** Friday, July 11, 2025 9:02:12 AM  
**Attachments:** [Lora Romney May 2025 - My Story.pdf](#)  
[HeidiSykoraKratomTestimony62025.pdf](#)  
[ConsumerAlert-7OH.pdf](#)  
[John Shinholser - AVKS.docx](#)

**Meeting Date:** 7/15/25

**Agenda Item No.** 19 (25-602)

You don't often get email from heidi.sykora1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

Since this is concerning an agenda item, I am forwarding my original email to this email as well.

Thank you,  
Heidi

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Dr. Heidi Sykora** <[heidi.sykora1@gmail.com](mailto:heidi.sykora1@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Fri, Jul 11, 2025 at 10:50 AM  
**Subject:** Request for Kratom Education & Regulation Guidance  
**To:** [City.Council@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:City.Council@surfcity-hb.org) <[City.Council@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:City.Council@surfcity-hb.org)>  
**Cc:** Lora Romney <[lora@plantsandherbals.org](mailto:lora@plantsandherbals.org)>, John <[jmshinholser1982@gmail.com](mailto:jmshinholser1982@gmail.com)>

Dear Mayor Burns and the Distinguished Members of the Huntington Beach Council,

My name is Dr. Heidi Sykora. I am a retired nurse practitioner and former healthcare executive living with multiple rare congenital neurological disorders that cause severe chronic pain. For more than six years, I have safely and effectively used natural kratom with excellent results and no adverse side effects. It has truly given me my life back.

Today, I volunteer as a kratom educator and advocate, working to promote safe access to this natural botanical. Alongside my respected colleagues—Lora Romney, President of the International Plant and Herbal Alliance, and John Shinholser, Executive Director of Veterans for Kratom Safe—we assist communities and states in crafting responsible kratom regulations that protect public health while preserving access to unadulterated, natural products.

We would be honored to provide a no-cost educational session for you or your team, either in person or via Zoom. We can also share examples of sensible local regulations that have worked successfully in other communities.

**Key Facts About Kratom:**

- **Natural kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*)** has been used safely in its whole-plant form for centuries. Its most abundant alkaloid, **mitragynine**, is a partial mu-opioid receptor agonist, similar in mechanism to some prescription medications but with a significantly lower risk profile.
- **Kratom is not a classical opioid**, and it belongs to the same botanical family as coffee. One of its most important distinctions is that it **does not cause respiratory depression**, even when used as a substitute for opioids such as heroin or fentanyl

—making it a life-saving harm reduction option.

- Millions of consumers report using kratom to manage **chronic pain, anxiety, PTSD, depression**, and for **increased energy or focus**—especially among veterans, retirees, and individuals with limited access to healthcare.
- **Restricting access to natural kratom** has serious consequences. Consumers denied access may return to far more dangerous substances, increasing risks of overdose, suicide, and worsening health conditions.

### **A Warning About Synthetics:**

We are deeply concerned about emerging synthetic or semi-synthetic products being falsely marketed as “kratom.” Chief among them is **7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH)**, a metabolite found only in trace amounts in natural kratom, but now being isolated and concentrated in synthetic products. These formulations:

- Are **not natural kratom**
- Have **no history of safe human use**
- **Do** carry risks of addiction and respiratory depression

We are committed to helping officials like you distinguish safe, regulated natural kratom from these dangerous imposters and avoid unintended harm.

### **Enclosed Materials:**

1. Testimony from Lora Romney
2. My personal testimony
3. John Shinholser- Americans for Kratom Safe testimony
4. The American Kratom Association’s warning letter on 7-OH synthetic products

We hope that you will pause any further action until we have the opportunity to provide a 30–60 minute evidence-based educational session and dialogue. Please feel free to contact me directly by phone or email.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Respectfully,**

Heidi  
**Heidi Sykora, DNP, GNP-BC (Ret.)**  
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## Lora Romney – Patient Testimony

I am a patient with Atypical Trigeminal Neuralgia (ATN). This disease causes severe facial nerve pain that never stops. The pain presents in my sinus regions on both sides. Imagine an ice cream headache that never goes away. This is what I experience daily. This disease is called “the suicide disease” because it can be one of the most painful conditions to live with.

I have been struggling with ATN for the past 13 years. I have tried everything to control my pain: brain surgery, a nerve stimulator implant in my face, blocks, lidocaine infusions, chiropractic, acupuncture, physical therapy and over 30+ medications to try and decrease this pain. I was referred to a pain clinic after my neurologist exhausted all options for me. Under the care of a pain physician, I was given two oxycodone per day.

This dose of oxycodone was not enough to control my excruciating pain. It gave me relief for approximately 4-5 hours. This meant that for 16 hours of the day and night, I did not have any pain control. I suffered immensely. Since I had tried all available options to control this pain, I began looking at alternative solutions. I heard about the plant kratom that many were using successfully to help control their TN pain. I decided to try it. Amazingly enough, I got instant relief. My pain did not go away, but it moved from an 8-9 to a 2-4 with the use of a low dose of kratom. I still have very bad days where nothing really helps, but the majority of the time, I can function very well. I am an 8-year kratom consumer. Kratom has allowed me to discontinue my daily opioid prescription! Kratom is a solution to the opioid epidemic!

Patients like me need pain control options. I read stories every day of patients who are being forced off their pain medication and given no other options. While taking acetaminophen or ibuprofen for pain control works for some, when people have severe illness and pain, these over-the-counter meds do not help. What is not understood by many lawmakers and physicians is that you cannot survive at constant 8-10 level pain for an extended period of time without

snapping. Mentally this amount of pain changes your brain, and suicide becomes a real option. We don't want to die. We want to live! I don't take kratom to get any sort of a high. In fact, the reason I love kratom is that it makes me feel more normal! There is no physical craving for this supplement. The only craving I have is the desire to have my pain drop a few points.

Pain patients are the silent minority in this country. We are the ones who have no voice. We are hidden away in our homes, unable to work, go to lunch, and even drive a car at times. All we are asking for is compassion and access to medication and natural supplements that give us some quality of life. Sometimes I lay awake at night thinking about the real possibility that kratom could someday become illegal. What would I then do for pain control? That is a thought that haunts me. Opioids are no longer available to most patients. I could not live at level 9-10 which is what I would be at without pain control. The answer for me was Kratom. I am grateful every day that it is legal and that I have the option to use this supplement.

Lora Romney  
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loraromney@gmail.com



My name is Dr. Heidi Sykora, I am a retired Nurse Practitioner and Health Care Executive.

I suffer from multiple chronic conditions, including Chiari Malformation (a congenital condition causing my brain to extend below my skull putting pressure on my spinal cord), Tethered Spinal Cord, Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome, Hereditary Alpha Tryptasemia and Thoracic Outlet Syndrome. These conditions cause severe pain, weakness and fatigue.

Kratom reduces the pain enough for me to exercise and stretch, which prevents further injuries and debility. Thanks to kratom my health has improved enough for me to enjoy our grandchildren. In my experience, kratom is by far the most effective and safest option for pain control.

Contrary to misconceptions, the natural plant is not intoxicating. It improves my focus, balance, and sleep. I have taken it safely without side effects for more than 6 years.

I have tried every pharmaceutical option and experienced serious adverse effects. For me, it's kratom or nothing. Kratom, for me, is hope for a future and a better quality of life.

I have witnessed the lifesaving effects of kratom not only for chronic pain sufferers but also for Veterans with PTSD, individuals suffering from rare conditions such as Fascio Scapular Humeral Dystrophy, and those struggling with addiction to alcohol and other substances.

I encourage and support the Kratom Consumer Protection Act (KCPA) to ensure safe quality kratom for adults. We must pass legislation this year to ensure safe quality kratom for adults who benefit from it.

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**American Kratom Association (AKA) Issues Consumer Alert on 7-OH Manufacturers Who are Deceptively Marketing Their Products as Kratom Products**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington, D.C., January 21, 2025- The American Kratom Association (AKA), the leading advocacy group for kratom consumer protection and scientific research, issues this Consumer Alert on 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) products that are deceptively labeled and marketed as being a "kratom" product. This false labeling deliberately misleads and confuses consumers who seek traditional kratom product formulations.

The AKA relies on current scientific research that clearly differentiates between mitragynine-dominant products, traditionally recognized as kratom, and those with synthetically concentrated levels of 7-OH. Kratom, a botanical substance known for its mitragynine content, should not have 7-OH exceed 2% of the overall alkaloid content in any product marketed and labeled to be kratom.

“The AKA is committed to protect consumers from deliberately deceptive marketing by 7-OH product manufacturers who are materially misleading and confusing consumers seeking traditional kratom products” stated Mac Haddow, Senior Fellow on Public Policy. “Any product containing a level of 7-OH that exceeds the 2% of the overall alkaloid content are not kratom products, and consumers looking to purchase traditional kratom products should avoid these mislabeled products.”

In addition, the AKA will (1) report any violative 7-OH products marketed and mislabeled as being a traditional kratom product to the Federal Trade Commission; and (2) any kratom or 7-OH products that make health claims not permitted under the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) to the Food and Drug Administration.

The AKA will publish and maintain an updated list of 7-OH products for consumer review that the AKA believes are improperly being marketed as kratom products and that will be referred to the Federal Trade Commission for their review and appropriate enforcement action for deceptive marketing. See the American Kratom [Releases](#) page for ongoing list.

###

About the American Kratom Association:

The American Kratom Association (AKA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting consumer access to safe kratom products. The AKA advocates for regulations that ensure product safety while protecting consumers' rights to make informed choices about their health. The AKA's efforts have led to the successful passage of Kratom Consumer Protection Acts in 13 states, with ongoing efforts to expand this number.



**AMERICAN VETERANS  
FOR KRATOMSAFE!**

An American Kratom Association Program

**JOHN SHINHOLSER,  
DIRECTOR OF ADVOCACY**

Shinholser@americankratom.org

KratomAnswers.org

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I am John Shinholser, the Advocacy Director for the American Kratom Safe Initiative. I'm a USMC veteran, a father, son, husband, and a person in long-term recovery from substance use disorders, having been sober for over 42 years.

My qualifications listed below allow me to testify expertly to the value of genuine Kratom products made from plants that meet FDA GMP standards.

I encourage you to please verify anti-kratom information for scientific proof. Observe the motives of other industries and agencies. Be advised that there is a lot of misinformation about Kratom. Many experts observe that a repeat of prohibition and the damage it caused to the United States is at stake. The failed war on drugs is in full effect. Harmful kratom bans will exacerbate the loss of constitutional freedoms and liberties, whereas commonsense kratom regulations address most, if not all, of the concerns associated with genuine kratom products.

### **Personal Kratom Experience**

Around 2012, Kratom began appearing on the random drug tests for participants in our substance use disorder recovery program; these individuals exhibited no signs of substance use and were exemplary participants, in contrast to those on pharmaceutical medications like methadone, suboxone, and other psychotropic drugs, which were clearly visible. When we inquired about what kratom was and why they used it, they explained that it helps with their anxiety, PTSD, and ADHD, as well as alleviating opiate cravings, among other issues. Then we started hearing that it helps alleviate the harsh detox symptoms of opiate withdrawal.

In 2016, we conducted a "pilot survey" in collaboration with a scientist, a sober home facility and a processor. Essentially, we took to the streets and engaged 30 opiate addicts, offering them a week in sober living along with access to natural powdered Kratom. Of those, 29 out of 30 participants successfully completed 7 days opiate-free, with many ending up completely substance-free by the end (we utilized a step-down Kratom system), much like the old days with buprenorphine. Shortly after this survey, Virginia expanded Medicaid, and now it seems there's a Suboxone clinic on every block.

I spent many years connecting with thousands of kratom consumers nationwide. I reviewed over 500 scientific studies to understand the "good, bad, and ugly deeply." Many abused

legal products like airplane glue, Nitrous Oxide “laughing gas”, cold medicines etc. are typically regulated as needed and are rarely banned.

### **This is what I find to be factual and truthful...**

- The “vast majority” of responsible adult consumers of genuine kratom products do not experience issues with consumption. Additionally, kratom serves as a solution for many conditions, problems, or purposes of use.
- Few consumers misuse kratom; according to a Johns Hopkins study, kratom has a 3% addiction potential. Keep in mind addiction is a mental illness, in part that means addiction has more “to do” with gene mapping and other underlying conditions. Natural kratom products compared to other addicted products is one of the safest substances to be addicted to.
- The few consumers who become addicted can typically access clinical interventions or other recovery pathways and may successfully recover fully.
- The only objections I have witnessed to regulating kratom for over-the-counter sales come from suboxone doctors, pharmacists, bureaucrats, trial lawyers, and individuals impacted by their loved ones' addictions.
- Fentanyl and other opiate addicts use kratom in their search for their next fix to alleviate cravings. Additionally, both illicit and legal drug users, as well as alcohol users, turn to kratom to minimize harm or stop using more dangerous substances.
- For those who “chase the dragon,” natural kratom products have a “ceiling” regarding its psychoactive effects and does not suppress heart function. Essentially, it is nearly impossible to overdose on kratom. When taken in higher doses, it acts as a partial agonist (like buprenorphine) rather than a full agonist like opiates.
- Every case I’ve encountered where a consumer experienced an adverse effect has been due to adulterated products, overconsumption, polydrug use, an unknown or undiagnosed medical condition, or abuse.
- Kratom has significantly contributed to the reduction of our nation’s overdose deaths. It has also played a crucial role in decreasing other substance use disorders, such as alcoholism, prescription misuse, and the illicit use of various substances.
- Responsible adult consumers seek the freedom to choose healing botanicals rather than feeling compelled to use pharmaceuticals, which often cause more harm in many instances.
- Veterans, retirees, individuals with chronic pain, and underserved populations view kratom as essential support for enhancing their quality of life.
- Virginia has enacted a Kratom Consumer Protection Act along with eighteen other states. This law allows adults to access FDA regulatory guidance on GMP products over the counter. Virginia does not have issues with authentic GMP kratom products and does not face a public safety problem. Scientific evidence indicates that kratom has minimal to no effect on driving. In simple terms, kratom works effectively!
- Special interest groups and uninformed ideologues have demonized kratom.

- Good American adult consumers are horrified, angry, and frustrated that their “solution” is colonizing them and destroying their lives.
- The 1994 DSHEA Act congressionally guarantees that genuine kratom products may be imported and processed according to FDA regulatory guidelines for good manufacturing practices.
- The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has heavily invested in kratom research and clearly supports its development, as have many other industry leaders. Kratom has well over 500 scientific studies completed, with more than 100 peer-reviewed. Many of our nation’s (and worldwide) universities and medical research institutions have ongoing human trials and studies.
- <https://vimeo.com/711837665>
- The FDA clearly shows a bias against kratom and oversteps its authority to undermine the value of kratom, suspiciously guarding its funding resources.

In simple terms, Kratom saves lives and is highly beneficial for responsible over-the-counter access for adults. Yes, it does need regulation, much like the 16 other states that have successfully done so. Kratom is an excellent harm reduction tool, one of the best I have ever encountered.

I know you have plenty of scientific evidence. When the facts and the truth are combined with common sense, all will be well.

### **Qualifications:**

John Shinholser served as President and then as President Emeritus of the McShin Foundation. It was founded in 2004 and named after its two recovering co-founders, John Shinholser and Carol McDaid—Virginia’s largest and most valued Authentic Recovery Community Organization. He is a United States Marine Corps veteran and previously owned a successful contracting business for over 30 years. He was President of the Richmond Chapter of the Painting and Decorating Contractors Association during that time.

John also served as president of Central Virginia’s SAARA (Substance Abuse and Addiction Recovery Alliance) and was a former SAARA of Virginia board member from 2001 to 2005. He spent twelve years on the board of directors of Rubicon, Inc., the last two as Chairman (1999-2013), at the time, Virginia's most comprehensive substance abuse treatment facility (230 beds). John was a subject matter expert for The Peer Recovery Center of Excellence, a peer-led national center providing training and technical assistance for substance use disorder recovery based at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC). This center was authorized under Section 7152 of the SUPPORT Act for patients and communities and funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). John served on the National Peer Recovery Alliance board in 2022 and 2023.

In 2005, John was honored with the prestigious America Honors Recovery Award from the Johnson Institute, being one of six recipients recognized nationally that year. Along with his wife, Carol McDaid, he also received the Caron Foundation's Outstanding Alumni Award in 2005. In 2006, John was awarded the coveted OSAS (Virginia State Office of Substance Abuse Services) Award of Virginia for Significant Contributions to the Field of Substance Use Disorder Recovery, making him the first member of the recovering community to receive this honor. John received the Visionary Leadership Award from the Virginia Summer Institute for Addiction Studies in 2022. Under John's leadership, McShin won the Recovery Community Organization of the Year Award for the United States and the Joel Hernandez Award presented by Faces and Voices of Recovery at a Washington D.C. ceremony in June 2011.

Additionally, under John's guidance, McShin claimed the national SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration) Recovery Month 2011 Flicker Award. McShin also won the SAMHSA Special Event of the Year award in 2014. John was honored as a nominee for the Richmond Times Dispatch 2016 Person of the Year. The McShin Foundation is a nationally accredited recovery community organization (CAPRSS). The Council on Accreditation of Peer Recovery Support Services (CAPRSS) is the only accrediting body in the U.S. specifically for Recovery Community Organizations (RCOs) and other programs offering addiction Peer Recovery Support Services (PRSS).

John co-wrote the McShin Recovery Coach manual and was featured in numerous publications, including Addiction Professional Magazine, Newsweek, The Richmond Times Dispatch, The Mechanicsville Local, Richmond Free Press, The Free Lance-Star of Fredericksburg, VA, North of The James Magazine, and many other local papers across Virginia, the U.S., and the U.K., as well as in the Virginia Association of Community Service Boards 2005 Annual Report. He has appeared in various news broadcasts and national documentaries, including Face the Nation, The Anonymous People, and Heroin, the Hardest Hit, to name a few. The McShin training curriculum is state-approved in WV, CT, and NY. John is an approved NAADAC CE Provider in all 50 states. Arkansas has adopted the McShin Model for its emerging Recovery Community Organizations.

John served as an appointed citizen member of the Virginia General Assembly's joint Senate/House subcommittee on substance abuse from 2008 to 2010 (SJ77). He was also a member of the Henrico County Drug Court Advisory Council and acted as an Honorary Deputy for the Richmond City Sheriff's Office. In 2013, John graduated from the Hanover County Sheriff's Citizens Police Academy.

In 2021, the Virginia General Assembly honored John Shinholser, Carol McDaid, and McShin with House Resolution 738, recognized McShin as a pioneer in establishing the peer recovery support model, Recovery Community Organization, and Recovery Residence model in Virginia. John was acknowledged on the House floor of the U.S. Congress (118th) on December 1st, 2023, by Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger. State Senator

VanValkenburg presented John with SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 174 from the 2024 Virginia General Assembly.

McShin was the first Virginia organization to train and certify peers; it was also the first National Alliance of Recovery Residence in Virginia. John traveled the country to provide authentic recovery coach training, and he and Carol traveled to Wales in 2011 to participate in the first U.K. recovery walk along with the launch of The Living Room in Cardiff, a Recovery Community Center. John has conducted multiple tours in the U.K., delivering recovery training, and has crisscrossed the country, providing recovery talks and training in correctional facilities across forty-six states.

John has testified, presented, facilitated, and been a keynote/featured speaker over a thousand times at various conferences, conventions, work groups, and forums on topics of recovery and solutions for substance use disorders. John retired from McShin on 12/31/2023 and is currently the Director of American Veterans for Kratom Safe. He resides in Ashland, Hanover County, Virginia, with his wife Carol and is working on his autobiography. He has enjoyed long-term recovery since August 10th, 1982.

**From:** [Madalyn Sklar](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Please Keep Kratom Legal  
**Date:** Friday, July 11, 2025 1:13:50 PM

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You don't often get email from [madalynsklar@gmail.com](mailto:madalynsklar@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I suffer from degenerative disc disease in my neck and back and was in pain management for 9 years, taking opioids daily to help relieve the pain. I was abruptly abandoned by the doctor due to the strict government policies on prescribing and was put into a 30-day taper. This is dangerous! I heard about Kratom from the documentary A Leaf of Faith (available on YouTube) and decided to try it. It's been six years and it's worked far better than any of the countless pharmaceuticals I used to take. I did not suffer from opioid withdrawals, I've had no negative side effects and I am free from debilitating pain. Whole-leaf Kratom powder is an amazing tool. Please keep it safe and legal with regulations, not prohibition.

**From:** [Amanda Rainer](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Kratom ban  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 4:55:47 PM

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You don't often get email from [missmanners6678@gmail.com](mailto:missmanners6678@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

### My Kratom journey

I have been using Kratom for the last 8yrs after being on pain medication for 30yrs anxiety and depression meds for 10. I have degenerative and cervical disc disease, spinal stenosis, herniated and bulging disc, bone spurs on the spine, which has given me scoliosis as an adult , fibromyalgia, trigeminal neuralgia aka suicide disease, basically I live with 10/20 of the most painful conditions to live with and many more other chronic pain conditions.

I lost my mother to the pain clinic and big pharma drugs in April 2013...She didn't abuse them, she took less than what she was prescribed, but tramadol and morphine took her life. After losing my parents 7 months apart and seen what she struggled with medication wise per Dr's orders and how it destroyed them...I vowed to live a holistic as possible life style. I just recently came off my blood pressure medication as well. In 8yrs I haven't had to consume over 50,000 pills.

I get yearly blood work, as well as yearly ultra sounds on my organs. I have improved so much and all under my Dr's care with tapering off my medications.... Dr. Chris McCurdy at Florida state university is doing a study on Kratom, there is a book Kratom is medicine written by a Dr, as well as a leaf of life documentary as well as 2 new documentaries in the making. Kratom has given me my life back as I'm disabled and pain management for life. My dose in 8yrs hasn't increased, I've taken days to a full month off and no harsh withdrawals or side effects.. Kratom is safe, follow the science take a moment to read the findings on many Dr's studies as well as John Hopkins University and their study. You'll find kratom to be just as safe as the coffee you drink and the air you breathe

Kratom has given me my life back, I'm not stuck in bed daily. I am not impaired by it. Kratom is safe and has been used for centuries in south east Asia.

I believe in holding vendors responsible for labeling, testing and proper facilities. And keeping legality of the plant so it is accessible to the many many hundred of thousands of folks who utilize kratom. Banning kratom wouldn't help, but make it much worse for an already struggling world with drugs, alcohol and prescription medications. Banning kratom would make such a negative impact on many lives.

I am originally from California and Huntington beach is my safe space.

Thank you for your time

From: [Mary Ann Dunkel](mailto:MaryAnnDunkel@gmail.com)  
To: [646166166@comcast.net](mailto:646166166@comcast.net)  
Subject: California - Please Oppose Prohibition of Kratom  
Date: Monday, July 14, 2025 4:59:28 PM

You don't often get email from [meqa@verizon.net](mailto:meqa@verizon.net). [Learn why this is important](mailto:meqa@verizon.net).

Fibromyalgia stole my life more than 35 years ago. I have severe chronic pain and fatigue that limits my activities of daily living. I have been prescribed more pharmaceuticals than I can remember and suffered damaging side effects from them. I've participated in psychotherapy, aqua therapy, multiple pain management programs, acupuncture and hypnosis. None of these modalities brought me relief and for quite some time I was bed fast and dependent on family for care. Unless you have experienced unremitting severe pain 24 hours a day, you cannot know the horror of it. My doctors have prescribed me morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone, tramadol and other medications to control the pain. None of them worked for very long and I could see these prescriptions were going to lead to addiction. Often I weaned myself off them and suffered through terrible withdrawal because the small amount of relief they gave was not worth addiction or overdose death. Bottom line is these narcotics are not effective in treating chronic pain. There were times when I thought about taking my life because I just couldn't get a break from the pain and didn't think I could take it any longer.

A friend introduced me to kratom. She had been consuming it for more than 10 years without side effects or becoming addicted to it. I started my own journey consuming kratom. Kratom is not a drug. It is a plant leaf supplement. It does not heal any disease but it has certainly improves my quality of life. I am having PAIN FREE days and my energy level is greatly improved. Kratom has restored my ability to life a normal life and I can enjoy all sorts of activities that make my life rich and full. Kratom does not make me high, nor do I experience side effects. I am now clear minded without the sedation caused by narcotics.

I am sick to death of reporters parroting the lies from the FDA. In fact, the FDA refused to comment about kratom in court. My doctors have prescribed me morphine, fentanyl, oxycodone, tramadol and other medications to control the pain. None of them worked for very long and I could see these prescriptions were going to lead to addiction. Often I weaned myself off them and suffered through terrible withdrawal because the small amount of relief they gave was not worth addiction or overdose death. Bottom line is these narcotics are not effective in treating chronic pain. There were times when I thought about taking my life because I just couldn't get a break from the pain and didn't think I could take it any longer.

A friend introduced me to kratom. She had been consuming it for more than 10 years without side effects or becoming addicted to it. I started my own journey consuming kratom. Kratom is not a drug. It is a supplement. It does not heal any disease but it has certainly improves my quality of life. I am having PAIN FREE days and my energy level is greatly improved. Kratom has restored my ability to life a normal life and I can enjoy all sorts of activities that make my life rich and full. Kratom does not make me high, nor do I experience side effects. I am now clear minded without the sedation caused by narcotics. I am devastated that the FDA is working to ban the ONLY thing that has helped me in the past 35 years.

I am sick to death of reporters parroting the lies from the FDA. Do you know that the FDA refused to testify against Kratom in court? See the link below.

FDA refuses to testify in Federal court

[https://d19c9y58w5sch.cloudfront.net/ur/735edeed90c033ce194d6576e059442/cml/mdmvU275Rz-2M5\\_vGRjd2Q?e=kelly%40nvsd.com&a=QRUwYcSFyKQ4JhEiDHQw&f=t-1&utm\\_source=Klaviyo&utm\\_medium=campaign-email&utm\\_campaign=FDA+Disinformation+Campaign+on+Kratom&\\_kx=Ys8WALBhwMbv9\\_24uG8yJajOrtX4GmbB9moQcLpDpb68mkj0TFbsatZGY\\_SybmLL&fbclid=IwAR2fOvZ5p2aL2t28wpcEPNUvWun6aJl9YWOYLX21B1PDEmZalGYw91CvU\\_aem\\_ARrQTjJ-9NuPFLgzq4DIAIC2e5d5MPV2J6j9kb9gTUC0zMeLSOpdvtVlqGBmY0Dp4](https://d19c9y58w5sch.cloudfront.net/ur/735edeed90c033ce194d6576e059442/cml/mdmvU275Rz-2M5_vGRjd2Q?e=kelly%40nvsd.com&a=QRUwYcSFyKQ4JhEiDHQw&f=t-1&utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=campaign-email&utm_campaign=FDA+Disinformation+Campaign+on+Kratom&_kx=Ys8WALBhwMbv9_24uG8yJajOrtX4GmbB9moQcLpDpb68mkj0TFbsatZGY_SybmLL&fbclid=IwAR2fOvZ5p2aL2t28wpcEPNUvWun6aJl9YWOYLX21B1PDEmZalGYw91CvU_aem_ARrQTjJ-9NuPFLgzq4DIAIC2e5d5MPV2J6j9kb9gTUC0zMeLSOpdvtVlqGBmY0Dp4)

Eight leading scientists have studied kratom and found it to be safe. It has been used for hundreds of years without problem. It is NOT an opioid, it is related to the coffee plant. It does attach to the same receptors in the brain as opioids but so do many other substances such as chocolate and milk.

I would suggest to you that the FDA wants it banned because it is cutting into Big Pharma's financial bottom line. People are finding the help they need without costly and deadly pharmaceuticals. I fear that if Kratom is banned this country will see an epidemic of self inflicted deaths by people who have no hope. In addition, kratom will become a black market over reach by government to protect the monies they get from the pharmaceutical There are other legitimate studies available many can be found on the American Kratom website.

Science and facts about kratom from The American Kratom Association at [www.amerikanratom.org/science](http://www.amerikanratom.org/science)

<https://www.amerikanratom.org>

Respectfully,  
Mary Ann Dunkel

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** [Marc Perdue](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Kratom Saved My Life - Please Read  
**Date:** Sunday, July 13, 2025 11:58:09 AM  
**Attachments:** [Kratom Advocate - Full Version.pdf](#)  
[Kratom FactsFiction FINAL.pdf](#)

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You don't often get email from mperdue98550@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Representative,

My name is Marc and I am a 38 year old male. My experience with Kratom and its legality is the focus of this letter.

I have had a long and treacherous battle with substance abuse. I have had multiple recurring bone tumors on the medial side of my tibia below my knee. The diagnosis and subsequent surgeries started at the age of 14. I have had six major surgeries on my right leg. Three of which were for tumor removal and the other three for MRSA treatment and debridement. My knee is completely damaged from the tumor destroying the top of my tibia and the MRSA completely eating away at my meniscus and cartilage. I have severe chronic and acute pain in that leg because of this. I am not a candidate for a knee replacement due to the bone being too damaged and not a stable site for the new artificial joint. I have also been in a severe car accident that lacerated my left arm, broke the fibula in my left leg, and tore the meniscus in my left knee.

The treatment of these ailments came with a lot of prescribed narcotic pain medications on a regular basis from age 14 on. My tolerance to these medications started to grow astronomically over 15 years and they stopped working effectively. I eventually was buying OxyContin on the street and abusing them heavily. This eventually led to IV heroin and cocaine use and the loss of anything of real value I had. I struggled with this crippling addiction for 18 years. I tried methadone, Suboxone, Vivitrol, complete abstinence and had NO significant success with any of them. Finally, I found that a strong 12 step recovery was what I needed, and it would work temporarily but the physical pain I suffer from would become too much and I would relapse on opiates. 5 1/2 years ago, I found kratom and decided to try it for pain relief. It helps me with pain, it helps me sleep, curbs craving, allows me to function and participate in activities of daily living without being in extreme pain. I do not have extreme tolerance building problems with kratom like I did with traditional opioids. The side effects are extremely minor and do not impair my judgment or ability to function.

I am up at 4:30 AM every day and at the gym by 4:45 cycling for an hour. I have lost weight in a healthy fashion due to my exercise and diet change that kratom has helped me make. I am much more positive about taking care of myself and am able to be present for life. My pain hasn't completely vanished, but it is manageable due to kratom. I am the healthiest and happiest I have ever been in my entire life! My spiritual growth has been a big factor as well in my 12 months of sobriety along with kratom. I have found that these two things working in harmony have literally saved my life! I am a completely different person, and my family has their son back. I do not want to die and the fact that this harmless plant is being targeted makes me scared for my life. Let's focus on alternative rehabilitation and recovery methods. Let's focus on the fentanyl and other analogues specifically...NOT A NATURAL BOTANICAL! Please...let's take a step back here and look at the success stories and reanalyze things.

Making this plant illegal will immediately criminalize innocent Americans that will suffer if kratom is taken away. The war on drugs has been a failure and taking away such a helpful tool people use to avoid lethal prescription drugs and heroin/fentanyl will cause even more deaths. People have bad reactions to everything. The number of hospitalizations and deaths from acetaminophen is astronomically higher than deaths supposedly caused by kratom. People are almost always having issues from polysubstance use where kratom is not the only drug in their system.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope you show empathy for chronic pain and recovering addicts that use this plant. Let's work with the American Kratom Association on advocating for safe manufacturing practices to ensure adults have access to pure and unadulterated kratom products in the USA.

Sincerely,

Marc Perdue

Email: [mperdue98550@gmail.com](mailto:mperdue98550@gmail.com)



[Kratom Story Video for AKA.MOV](#)

To whom it may concern:

My name is Marc and I am a 33 year old male. My experience with Kratom and its legality is the focus of this letter.

I have had a long and treacherous battle with substance abuse. I have had multiple recurring bone tumors on the medial side of my tibia below my knee. The diagnosis and subsequent surgeries started at the age of 14. I have had six major surgeries on my right leg. Three of which were for tumor removal and the other three for MRSA treatment and debridement. My knee is completely damaged from the tumor destroying the top of my tibia and the MRSA completely eating away at my meniscus and cartilage. I have severe chronic and acute pain in that leg because of this. I am not a candidate for a knee replacement due to the bone being too damaged and not a stable site for the new artificial joint. I have also been in a severe car accident that lacerated my left arm, broke the fibula in my left leg, and tore the meniscus in my left knee.

The treatment of these ailments came with a lot of prescribed narcotic pain medications on a regular basis from age 14 on. My tolerance to these medications started to grow astronomically over 15 years and they stopped working effectively. I eventually was buying OxyContin on the street and abusing them heavily. This eventually led to IV heroin and cocaine use and the loss of anything of real value I had. I struggled with this crippling addiction for 18 years. I tried methadone, Suboxone, Vivitrol, complete abstinence and had NO significant success with any of them. Finally, I found that a strong 12 step recovery was what I needed, and it would work temporarily but the physical pain I suffer from would become too much and I would relapse on opiates. 5 1/2 years ago, I found kratom and decided to try it for pain relief. It helps me with pain, it helps me sleep, curbs craving, allows me to function and participate in activities of daily living without being in extreme pain. I do not have extreme tolerance building problems with kratom like I did with traditional opioids. The side effects are extremely minor and do not impair my judgment or ability to function.

I am up at 4:30 AM every day and at the gym by 4:45 cycling for an hour. I have lost weight in a healthy fashion due to my exercise and diet change that

kratom has helped me make. I am much more positive about taking care of myself and am able to be present for life. My pain hasn't completely vanished, but it is manageable due to kratom. I am the healthiest and happiest I have ever been in my entire life! My spiritual growth has been a big factor as well in my 12 months of sobriety along with kratom. I have found that these two things working in harmony have literally saved my life! I am a completely different person, and my family has their son back. I do not want to die and the fact that this harmless plant is being targeted makes me scared for my life. Let's focus on alternative rehabilitation and recovery methods. Let's focus on the fentanyl and other analogues specifically...NOT A NATURAL BOTANICAL! Please...let's take a step back here and look at the success stories and reanalyze things.

Making this plant illegal will immediately criminalize innocent Americans that will suffer if kratom is taken away. The war on drugs has been a failure and taking away such a helpful tool people use to avoid lethal prescription drugs and heroin/fentanyl will cause even more deaths. People have bad reactions to everything. The number of hospitalizations and deaths from acetaminophen is astronomically higher than deaths supposedly caused by kratom. People are almost always having issues from polysubstance use where kratom is not the only drug in their system.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I hope you show empathy for chronic pain and recovering addicts that use this plant. Let's work with the American Kratom Association on advocating for safe manufacturing practices to ensure adults have access to pure and unadulterated kratom products in the USA.

Sincerely,

Marc Perdue

Email: mperdue98550@gmail.com



# KRATOM: FACT VS. FICTION

More than 2 million Americans safely consume Kratom to improve their health and well-being and have done so for decades. It is regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as a dietary supplement, and people who consume Kratom report doing so for the same reasons as people who drink coffee, tea, or other caffeinated beverages. Surveys show that Kratom consumers are educated, middle-income, employed, and have health insurance. Despite being used responsibly for decades in the United States, there are many misconceptions about Kratom, making it difficult to tell fact versus fiction.

## FICTION:

Kratom is an opioid just like heroin.

## FACT:

Drugs like heroin, oxycodone, and other “classic” opioids are full opioid agonists, meaning they fully bind to and activate the brain’s receptors. Kratom, on the other hand, is a partial agonist, producing milder effects with lower dependence and abuse potential. Evidence suggests Kratom does not cause respiratory depression like other opioids, a common cause of fatal overdoses.

## FICTION:

Kratom should be classified as a Schedule I controlled substance, ranking it higher than cocaine and methamphetamine.

## FACT:

Schedule I substances are without accepted medical use and have a high potential for abuse. Published analyses have shown that Kratom does not meet the test to be a Schedule I drug and does not fit into the FDA’s 2017 abuse potential assessment guidance. Respondents to official surveys from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration do not report abusing Kratom or seeking treatment for Kratom dependence, refuting claims from treatment clinics that Kratom abuse is prevalent. While many independent scientists have said Kratom holds the potential to address pain, scheduling Kratom will make any further research on the product virtually impossible.

## FICTION:

Kratom is highly addictive and prone to abuse.

## FACT:

Similar to coffee, tea, and other caffeinated drinks, consumers may become dependent on Kratom with daily use, which is not the same as addiction. Many people need a cup of coffee to wake up in the morning, but we wouldn’t say that they’re “addicted” to coffee. “Withdrawal” symptoms of Kratom are comparable to those of caffeine, nicotine smoking cessation aids, or antidepressants. Unlike substances with high abuse potential, increasing the dosage of Kratom does not lead to exponentially stronger euphoriant effects.

## FICTION:

Kratom is responsible for more than 44 deaths according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

## FACT:

There are no deaths directly linked to Kratom consumption. Recently published studies found no evidence of deaths linked to Kratom, and publicly-available data show that nearly all of the recently reported fatalities were found to have multiple substances present in their system at the time of death and/or prior health issues. Contrast this with the fact that more than 115 Americans die daily from opioid overdoses, according to The National Institute on Drug Abuse, while millions consume Kratom safely and responsibly.

## FICTION:

The Kratom industry has no production standards or consumer safety protocols.

## FACT:

Kratom is regulated by the FDA. To provide consumers with safe, high-quality products, the Kratom Trade Association requires its members to adhere to a strict set of principles, sets product testing protocols exceeding Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) guidelines, and assists manufacturers in obtaining GMP facilities certifications. The organization also supports age restrictions and labeling guidelines outlining responsible use.

**Sources:** Henningfield, J. E., Fant, R. V., & Wang, D. W. (2018). The abuse potential of kratom according the 8 factors of the controlled substances act: Implications for regulation and research. *Psychopharmacology*, 235(2), 573–589.  
Pinney Associates. (November 28, 2016). Assessment of Kratom Under the CSA Eight Factors and Scheduling Recommendation.  
Kruegel, A. C., Gassaway, M., Kapoor, A., Váradí, A., Majumdar, S., Filizola, M., Javitch, J., & Sames, D. (2016). Synthetic and Receptor Signaling Explorations of the Mitragyna Alkaloids: Mitragynine as an Atypical Molecular Framework for Opioid Receptor Modulators. *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, 138 (21), 6754–6764.  
Grundmann, O. (2017). Patterns of Kratom use and health impact in the US — Results from an online survey. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 176:63-70.

**From:** [Denise Geltman](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Please do not ban Kratom  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 5:05:08 PM

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You don't often get email from [denisegeltman@gmail.com](mailto:denisegeltman@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sirs/Madams:

My name is Denise Geltman and I have been taking Kratom since 2016.

I live in Los Angeles County and I am 60 years old and suffer from severe IBS, Fibromyalgia, Migraines and chronic severe nerve pain and spasms to my Legs, feet and intestines.

Kratom has changed my whole life. I wasn't able to work because I cannot sit in a chair or stand for long and my intestinal pain had me doubled up in pain on my bed.

I was existing, not participating in my life, my family, the economy or my community.

Because of Kratom I have been able to keep a part time job since 2016 and I am living my life and contributing, instead of just existing in pain.

You may not be aware that last fall Dr. Scott Gottlieb of the FDA went directly to the WHO and UN asking them to ban Kratom worldwide and they said no because it is helping so many people. The documentation of this letter exists on the Internet if you would like to review it.

Please do not ban Kratom. It helps so many millions of people. I only condone PURE LEAF Kratom, due to its safety. Not extracts.

Thank you for your kind consideration of my request.

Sincerely,

Denise E. Geltman

818-486-4904

[denisegeltman@gmail.com](mailto:denisegeltman@gmail.com)

**From:** [James Banks](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Cc:** [Matthew Lowe](#); [Walker Gallman](#)  
**Subject:** Bill language and Public Testimony and 7/15/25  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 9:51:13 AM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[HUNTINGTON BEACH BILL LANGUAGE.pdf](#)  
[Huntington Beach City Council Public Testimony of the Global Kratom Coalition.pdf](#)

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You don't often get email from [jbanks@globalkratomcoalition.org](mailto:jbanks@globalkratomcoalition.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Councilmembers,

On behalf of the Global Kratom Coalition, I respectfully urge the City Council to reject a blanket ban on kratom under Agenda Item 25-602. Instead, we encourage consideration of a regulatory framework based on our attached model legislative language and written testimony. We stand ready to engage directly, provide technical guidance, and support the City's efforts to adopt a policy that prioritizes consumer safety while avoiding the unintended consequences of an unregulated market. We would welcome the opportunity to assist the City Attorney and HBPD in this process.

Best,



**James Banks**

Director of Government Affairs | Global Kratom Coalition

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C: 202-262-0119

E: [JBanks@GlobalKratomCoalition.org](mailto:JBanks@GlobalKratomCoalition.org)

W: [www.globalkratomcoalition.org](http://www.globalkratomcoalition.org)

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE HUNTINGTON BEACH BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULATING THE SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF KRATOM PRODUCTS**

**SECTION 1. TITLE.**

This ordinance shall be known as the "Kratom Consumer Protection Ordinance."

**SECTION 2. PURPOSE.**

The purpose of this ordinance is to protect public health and safety by:

1. Defining kratom as a natural botanical product;
2. Prohibiting the sale of synthetic or chemically altered kratom compounds;
3. Restricting kratom sales to adults aged twenty-one and over.

**SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.**

(a) **Kratom** means the natural leaf of the *Mitragyna speciosa* plant, including powders and extracts made through traditional methods such as drying, grinding, or extraction with water or food-grade solvents.

(b) **Kratom product** means any item intended for human consumption that contains kratom or kratom extract as defined above.

(c) **Synthetic kratom compound** means any substance created by chemical synthesis or biosynthesis that is not naturally found in the kratom plant, including but not limited to:

- Chemically enhanced 7-hydroxymitragynine;
- Mitragynine pseudoindoxyl or other kratom alkaloid analogues;
- Any kratom product containing more than 2% 7-hydroxymitragynine in total alkaloids.

**SECTION 4. PROHIBITIONS.**

(a) It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale, or distribute any kratom product to a person under twenty-one (21) years of age.

(b) It is unlawful to sell, offer for sale, manufacture, or distribute any kratom product that contains synthetic kratom compounds.

(c) It is unlawful to manufacture or sell any kratom product that is misleadingly labeled, adulterated, or marketed in a manner appealing to children.

**SECTION 5. PENALTIES.**

Violations of this ordinance may result in civil fines, product seizure, and business license suspension or revocation, as determined by the enforcing authority.

**SECTION 6. ENFORCEMENT.**

This ordinance shall be enforced by **[INSERT ENFORCING AGENCY]**.

**SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

This ordinance shall take effect thirty (**##**) days after its adoption.

**Public Testimony of the Global Kratom Coalition  
Before the Huntington Beach City Council**

**Date: July 15, 2025**

**Re: Opposition to a Blanket Ban on Kratom – Support for the Kratom Consumer Protection Ordinance**

**To: Councilwoman Gracey Larrea-Van Der Mark, Mayor Pat Burns, and Mayor Pro Tem Casey McKeon**

Honorable Mayor Burns, Mayor Pro Tem McKeon, Councilwoman Van Der Mark, and Members of the Huntington Beach City Council:

On behalf of the Global Kratom Coalition (GKC), I submit this testimony for the public record in opposition to any blanket prohibition on the sale and distribution of all forms of kratom within the City of Huntington Beach. We urge the Council to reject categorical bans in favor of adopting common-sense regulations, such as those articulated in the attached model Kratom Consumer Protection Ordinance, which is tailored to protect consumers, support public health and safety, and ensure marketplace accountability.

Kratom is a tropical tree (*Mitragyna speciosa*) that is native to Southeast Asia. It is a naturally occurring botanical substance long used for energy, focus, and mood enhancement.. The GKC does not represent or support any manufacturer or distributor engaged in the sale of synthetic or adulterated kratom products. On the contrary, we stand at the forefront of national efforts to prohibit the sale of synthetic and concentrated derivatives of kratom such as chemically altered 7-hydroxymitragynine and mitragynine pseudoindoxyl products., These adulterated products pose legitimate public health and safety concerns. However, a blanket ban on all kratom products, including natural, unadulterated leaf forms, would drive legitimate consumers toward an unregulated and clandestine market. That outcome would endanger rather than protect the public. Numerous state and local jurisdictions are recognizing this (Riverside and Orange County Boards of Supervisors) and that well-crafted regulatory frameworks, such as the proposed ordinance we have provided, are the most effective and legally defensible way to ensure product safety, prevent access by minors, and eliminate predatory marketing practices.

The proposed Kratom Consumer Protection Ordinance outlines a robust and easily enforceable framework that includes the following key provisions:

1. **Clear statutory definition of kratom as a natural botanical product**, distinguished from synthetic or chemically manipulated compounds;
2. **Explicit prohibition on the sale or manufacture of synthetic kratom compounds**, including those containing more than 2% 7-hydroxymitragynine or other non-naturally occurring alkaloids;

3. **Minimum age restriction of 21 years old for purchase**, in alignment with prevailing standards for adult-use products;
4. **Ban on misleading labeling, child-oriented marketing, or adulterated formulations**, to ensure responsible commercial conduct.

We believe these provisions can be enforced at the local level, protect consumer safety, and align with the city's broader commitment to public health and safety with the benefit of responsible governance.

The Global Kratom Coalition welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Huntington Beach in educating and implementing a regulatory solution that is grounded in science, aligned with consumer protections, and firmly opposed to the dangerous proliferation of synthetic analogues and concentrated products - draw the line at natural. We urge you to adopt regulations, as attached hereto, that protect consumers from dangerous derivatives whilst protecting access to natural kratom.

Respectfully submitted,

James Banks  
Director of Government Affairs  
Global Kratom Coalition  
[jbanks@globalkratomcoalition.org](mailto:jbanks@globalkratomcoalition.org)



July 14, 2025

Mayor Pat Burns and Council Members  
Huntington Beach City Council

Re: Proposed Ban on Kratom

Dear Mr. Mayor

As Founder and Director of 7 Hope Alliance Foundation, I am writing today in OPPOSITION of the City of Huntington Beach's proposed ban on kratom and 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) products.

The 7 Hope Alliance Foundation was established to deliver public education and continuing science research on 7-OH and its remarkable pain management properties that are repeatedly reinforcing 7-OH as a harm reduction tool for people struggling with chronic pain.

Despite what you may hear or read in the media, 7-OH has a very strong safety profile, in fact, even safer than kratom and mitragynine. As the predominant number of 7-OH products on the market are tablets, studies in rodents and large animals show that when orally-ingested, 7-OH has no lethal dose. In fact, 7-OH has a ceiling effect and is only a "partial" opioid agonist, unlike traditional opioids like fentanyl which are "full" opioid agonists which can cause respiratory depression, overdose, or death.

As a result, the State of California just walked away from a proposed ban on kratom and 7-OH during the current legislative session citing that there simply wasn't yet enough scientific information to justify or warrant a ban. The State of Rhode Island recently reversed a prior ban on kratom and has made kratom legal again.

The opioid crisis hit Huntington Beach as much as it did in other geographical locations. Millions of Americans, including HB residents, struggle with chronic pain. Many of them have already discovered the power of 7-OH and have told us, via consumer testimonials, that 7-OH is not only saving their lives, but offering them a better quality of life.



We urge you to allow the science to speak and to not move forward with a ban on a product that is saving lives. The residents of HB need your help so they do not turn back to deadly opioids. Please vote to OPPOSE this proposed ban.

Thank you

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jackie Subeck', is written over a faint circular watermark.

Jackie Subeck

Founder & Director

7 Hope Alliance Foundation

310 849 4403

[jackie@7hopealliance.org](mailto:jackie@7hopealliance.org)

[www.7hopealliance.org](http://www.7hopealliance.org)

**7 Hope Alliance Foundation**

6600 Sunset Blvd. • Suite 200 • Los Angeles, CA 90028

+1 (424) 448-3442 • [donations@7hopealliance.org](mailto:donations@7hopealliance.org)

**From:** [dijonevans](mailto:dijonevans)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Cc:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Kratom  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 6:06:03 PM

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You don't often get email from [dijonevans@gmail.com](mailto:dijonevans@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Kratom has literally saved my life and given me the hope that I had lost due to the opioid epidemic and my medical history. I have full body CRPS with organ involvement, optical, occipital and trigeminal Neuralgia, multiple organ failure and more than 240 surgeries and procedures. I wasn't supposed to live to be 30, but here I am after a very difficult 30 years and several near death escapes, I just turned 61. I have had amputations, pulmonary embolisms, sepsis, gangrene, 17 bouts of osteomyelitis and now also have osteonecrosis of my jaw, sinuses and facial bones, including the left inner ear, and soon to be the right, with it affecting the entire inside of my skull. There is nothing that can be done for me because I am too high risk for the needed surgeries to repair my skull and inner ears. They can't do surgery because of the high risk that I will develop osteomyelitis and it will lead to the infection of my brain. If by chance that I didn't develop osteomyelitis, there's an even higher risk that the surgical bone placement would fail because of the necrosis. The only places that could put me into a medically induced coma and provide prophylaxis antibiotic, and then do the surgery while still keeping me in a comatose state, are far enough away that I would have to be flown to, which cannot be done because I don't have any bone in-between my brain and inner ear which provides protection to our brains when we experience pressure changes while in flight. So, now with everything else that I have encountered and fought to live through, I am nearing the end of the road. For over 15 years I was bedridden and unable to care for myself, everything had to be done for me, and it included in home nursing care for the PICC lines.. When opioids were removed from the picture, even though I was diagnosed as terminal, I wasn't a terminal cancer patient, so I wouldn't be able to get through the worst known pain to us is what I experience daily. It feels like I am being electrocuted from the inside out and my tissues are being seared together. That's on a good day! Unfortunately I was not able to take it anymore and I was ready to take my own life. After spending most of my younger years in college, including medical school, I am very good at research and the word kratom was introduced to me. After several months of research, talking to my medical team and my mentors, I decided that if I was going to look at ending my own life, that kratom would definitely be worth a shot. I ordered some pure, unadulterated kratom leaf powder from a reputable vendor and waited. Because of a holiday, and a weekend, it took longer than expected to arrive. But I thought that it was just a scam anyway and held out no hope that it would help. I was, after all from the science background and I held no belief in dietary supplements. I have spent the past 8 years eating crow for that belief because as I said, kratom quite literally saved my life. As I was leaving the house to follow through with my plans to take my own life, the mailman showed up with my first package. I had ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO LOSE, but EVERYTHING TO GAIN by going back in the house and trying kratom. I did. Approx. 20ish minutes later, my pain was at a tolerable level, instead of being in bed, crying and begging for the torture to end, my partner came home and found me sitting on the couch smiling. He knelt beside me and cried. He knew that the kratom had arrived and it was helping. Kratom doesn't get rid of all of my pain, it allows me tolerable levels.

I never thought that I would be alive to see the pictures of my grandkids high-school graduations and through kratom I was able to do more than see the pictures- I attended all three of their graduations!! Now, I am going to be a Great grandma. I never would have been

able to experience any of these blessings if it wasn't for kratom!!! Kratom has given me so much more than I ever could have imagined!!

If kratom is banned,, you will be sentencing many law abiding, productive citizens to unreasonable arrest, and pushing them to A DANGEROUS BLACK MARKET!!! PLEASE don't ban kratom! It has helped millions of people who take it and do so responsibly!

We need regulations, but not bans..

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Dijon Evans  
Sacramento CA

Scientific proof !

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed ban on kratom. As a substance with significant potential therapeutic benefits and a low risk of harm when used appropriately, the decision to ban kratom appears to be based on incomplete or selective data. The article that alerted me to this was very off base with its description of Kratom. I respectfully urge lawmakers to reconsider this ban in light of the testimonies and research provided by experts in the field.

I know you will be sent thousands of personal testimonies so beyond these stories and mine I share with you several respected researchers and medical professionals. They have publicly highlighted the benefits of kratom when used responsibly, particularly for individuals suffering from chronic pain, opioid use disorder, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. The following video testimonies and peer reviewed research paper from the World Health Organization further underscore the need for a balanced, evidence-based approach when assessing the risks and benefits of kratom.

1. Toxicologist Marilyn Huestis, AB, MS, PHD

Dr. Marilyn Huestis testimony, available here:

<https://youtu.be/awdX7ND8Hvo?si=5Gr9ljzjOr9YBRr8I> as well as here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4KZjUdWO18>, she emphasizes the need for a balanced, scientific approach to kratom regulation. She addresses the presumed Kratom overdose deaths and explains how that the majority of them were either poly pharmaceutical, adulterated Kratom or incomplete testing. There is call to action here and it's not to ban it is to regulate. In both videos, Dr. Huestis discusses the growing body of evidence suggesting that kratom could play a critical role in harm reduction, particularly for individuals seeking alternatives to dangerous opioids. Dr. Huestis perspective is valuable in reminding us that comprehensive, evidence-based policies should be implemented to regulate kratom, not an outright ban that could remove a vital therapeutic option from the public.

2. Dr. Christopher McCurdy

Dr. Christopher McCurdy is a professor of medicinal chemistry and a leading pharmacologist with extensive expertise in the pharmacology of kratom. He is one of the foremost researchers on the substance and has spent years investigating its active compounds and therapeutic potential. Dr. McCurdy's research demonstrates that kratom's primary active compounds, mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine, exhibit pain-relieving properties without the same risks of respiratory depression that are common

with opioids. Furthermore, his work suggests kratom's potential to aid in opioid withdrawal therapy. In his testimony, available <https://youtu.be/9kvXz-wuySM?si=WeuK3sHwt9icxvmv>, Dr. McCurdy highlights the need for more research and responsible regulation, rather than an outright prohibition of kratom, which could deprive individuals of a safer alternative to opioids or other pharmaceuticals.

### 3. Dr. Kirsten Smith

Dr. Smith, a researcher at the University of Florida, has investigated the pharmacokinetics of kratom and its potential as a harm-reduction tool for individuals struggling with opioid addiction. Her testimony, accessible here: [https://youtu.be/CrQxVDb-48Y?si=nbrThQ6iu3DB6hH\\_](https://youtu.be/CrQxVDb-48Y?si=nbrThQ6iu3DB6hH_) emphasizes kratom's ability to reduce opioid cravings and withdrawal symptoms without the severe risks associated with opioid use. Dr. Smith's work suggests that banning kratom could deprive vulnerable populations of a potential harm-reduction strategy, exacerbating the opioid crisis rather than alleviating it.

### 4. Dr. Ed Boyer

Dr. Boyer, a renowned toxicologist, addresses the safety profile of kratom in his testimony here: [https://youtu.be/6l4GcFn\\_IDg?si=G8sbSWDhGpWifvFk](https://youtu.be/6l4GcFn_IDg?si=G8sbSWDhGpWifvFk) He points out that, although there have been reports of adverse events associated with kratom, these cases are often linked to underlying medical history, misuse or contamination rather than the inherent properties of the substance. He underscores that kratom-related deaths, when they occur, are typically tied to poly-drug use and not kratom alone. Dr. Boyer advocates for further research into kratom's safety profile rather than an outright ban based on incomplete data.

### 5. Dr. Jack Henningfield

Dr. Henningfield, an expert in addiction research, has also spoken on the issue of kratom's potential to aid in addiction treatment, particularly for individuals with opioid dependence. His testimony available here: <https://youtu.be/jWDXBQOqyU4?si=pQ39raaasgbNYREQ> emphasizes that, when used in a controlled and informed manner, kratom could serve as an alternative to opioid painkillers, which are responsible for a significant number of fatalities in the U.S. Dr. Henningfield cautions against hastily categorizing kratom as a dangerous substance, particularly in light of its therapeutic applications.

### 6. Peer Reviewed Report by World Health Organization on Kratom(Mitragyna speciosa), mitragynine, and 7-

hydroxymitragynine [https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/controlled-substances/unedited--advance-copy-44th-ecdd-review-report\\_kratom.pdf?sfvrsn=8d699207\\_8&download=true](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/controlled-substances/unedited--advance-copy-44th-ecdd-review-report_kratom.pdf?sfvrsn=8d699207_8&download=true) I recognize this document is long and not easily understood without a scientific background. I hope your board will take the time to at least review this singular key point. Page 39 Section 14 3rd Paragraph - Dr. Marek Chawarski states "This lack of association between mitragynine blood concentration and risk of lethality suggests that kratom consumption was not a causal factor in the vast majority of kratom-associated deaths, but rather was an incidental finding."

The ban on kratom, a substance that has been used for centuries in Southeast Asia for pain relief and as a stimulant, seems premature given the growing body of scientific

evidence supporting its potential benefits and its relatively low risk profile when used responsibly. While acknowledging the need for continued research and proper regulation, it is essential to consider the voices of professionals who understand the nuanced effects of kratom. These experts urge caution when drawing conclusions about its safety and efficacy, pointing to the lack of conclusive evidence supporting a ban, and suggesting that education, research, and regulation are the more appropriate courses of action. The state of Georgia along with many others recently put into effect a KCPA bill that is easily replicated. You can see the bill here: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20192020/183236>

As your area and the world continues to grapple with the opioid crisis, banning kratom could inadvertently limit a valuable tool for those seeking alternatives to pharmaceuticals or for those in recovery from addiction. I know many veterans, cancer patients and chronic pain sufferers that have been able to improve their quality of life with this leaf. It is important to remember that the effects of substances like kratom are not universally harmful and that the risk of misuse or adverse effects is greatly minimized when people have access to education, appropriate dosages, and regulation.

In conclusion, I respectfully ask that lawmakers reconsider the proposed ban on kratom. Instead, I advocate for a research-driven approach that includes informed regulation and public education to ensure that kratom's potential benefits are not unjustly hindered

Sent from my Metro by T-Mobile 5G Device

**From:** [Misty Brown](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** RE: Kratom Ban Hearing  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 6:09:50 PM

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You don't often get email from mistyb0512@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I was addicted to FDA approved pain pills, benzos and muscle relaxers for 11 years straight, 2008-2019.

I got fired from chronic pain management in April 2019 because I didn't show up for a per contract pill count. I was 11 pills short and my drug dealers didn't have any pink oxy 10's.

After that, I went to the streets and started doing cocaine while I was searching for a new pain management doctor.

In June 2019, whilst in cocaine withdrawal, I watched that documentary "A Leaf of Faith." My journey with Kratom began the very next day.

Kratom shut that "I need one more snort, one more pill, one more escape" noise off in my brain. It allowed me to work on my whys of addiction. I have not been back to pain management in 6 years.

I am a functioning member of society again. I am a thriving mother again. I pay taxes again. I am no longer a burden to my kids. I am now a first time grandma.

I will be forever grateful and thankful that I accidentally found lab-tested whole-leaf powder Kratom.

I now pass on my journey, wisdom and science to help those struggling with addiction, chronic pain, anxiety and depression.

Yours truly, Kratom advocate/activist Misty Brown from Colorado est. 2019.

**From:** [Wayne Miller](#)  
**To:** [supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org](mailto:supplementalcomm@surfcity-hb.org)  
**Subject:** Kratom ban  
**Date:** Monday, July 14, 2025 6:14:18 PM

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You don't often get email from wayneleemiller1977@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Plain leaf kratom has been widely used in the US for about 20 years. I personally have used it since 2012. I was a terrible alcoholic for years. It ruined my life. I had several DUIs, lost many good people in my life, and I actually ended up homeless because of that addiction. I went to AA meetings, detoxes, tried to change things in my life, and nothing worked. Finally, with a little research, I found out about a plant called kratom, that was helping alcoholics to stop drinking. I was very skeptical but I was at my wits end. I ordered some. It took about a week for me to figure out what dosage I needed (because it doesn't work the same with everyone) but after a week, the urge to drink was gone. Completely gone. I wasn't high, but I didn't want to drink. An absolute miracle for myself. That was 2012. The next 4 years of my life was great. I was prospering like I had never before. But in 2016, I had heard that the FDA was going to schedule kratom. I was very disappointed but felt I hadn't been drinking in 4 years, so I could do this. I stopped taking the kratom. Within 3 weeks, I was drinking again. Within 5 months, I had lost everything that I had gained in those last 4 years. Ended up in another rehab. Once I graduated that program in 2018, I moved to a new location. Unfortunately within a few weeks, the alcohol urges had come back with a vengeance. I didn't cave, but I was struggling. I thought about kratom and how I wished they didn't ban it, only to find out, it was never banned. I ordered some immediately. I write this 7 years later, and can say, I'm blessed. My life is something I never could have imagined. Kratom is a godsend for me. I take it twice a day, I put some of the powder into capsules (because it tastes horrible).

But that's real kratom, plain leaf kratom. The ground up powder from the leaf of a tree.

Kratom has two main alkaloids, mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine. Kratom is about 1.5% mitragynine, and about 0.004% 7-hydroxymitragynine (or 7-oh) as most people refer to it.

A few years back, some chemist's from China have figured out how to synthesize 7-oh. And the thing about 7-oh is, it's more powerful than morphine as far as it's binding to the opioid receptors. In a normal kratom dose, it's very small, about 0.25-0.5 mgs of 7-oh.

However, these chemists are now pressing pills, and making liquid shots that contain up to 45 mgs of 7-oh, (which is more 7-oh than is in a 2.2lb package of plain leaf kratom)

And tolerance builds fast. For instance, if you took it everyday, you might start with 25mgs, and by next week, you'd have to take 50mgs to get that same high.

And yes, with 7-oh, it's a high.

And it's not kratom. They market it as kratom, but it's not kratom.

There are a lot of people that use kratom to manage their pain. I don't. I don't have any pain. I use it for abstinence from alcohol, and it also gives you a good energy boost. I can't drink coffee, because it makes me jittery, but kratom is a great alternative.

But for those who use it for their chronic pain, this is a life saver for them. And there's millions in the US using it for that. There are many of us that have used plain leaf kratom

almost everyday for years, and have never had a problem. But once you start using extracts or 7-oh, it can start to financially, get your life out of control, and you run into the same problems you would as any hardcore addiction.

But with regular plain leaf kratom, this is not the case. I still take the same dosage as when I started again 8 years ago.

My ask is for you to keep plain leaf kratom legal, since it helps 10-15 million Americans everyday. But to also, ban synthetic, and semi-synthetic compounds like 7-oh and pseudo mitragynine.



Written testimony of Dr. Michele Ross  
Advisor, 7-HOPE Alliance Foundation  
RE: Proposed Huntington Beach Kratom Ban

July 14, 2025

Dear Mayor Pat Burns and members of the Huntington Beach City Council,

My name is Dr. Michele Ross. I am providing testimony in **OPPOSITION of banning kratom and 7-OH products.**

I voice these concerns not only as a former resident of California, but as someone who continues to educate and consult chronic pain patients in California and throughout the United States via online harm reduction coaching, courses, and books.

I am one of the leading experts on kratom and kratom alkaloids such as 7-OH. I authored the book "*Kratom is Medicine*" in 2021. I am a neuropharmacologist with a PhD in Neuroscience (2008) and my work has focused on drug addiction. I have consulted companies, healthcare professionals, and consumers on kratom and plant-based products such as cannabis for over 13 years, and am the CEO of Infused Partners. I'm also the Scientific Advisor at the 7-HOPE Alliance Foundation, a national, nonpartisan, non-profit organization focused on research, education, and advocacy for users of kratom leaf and kratom leaf-derived products such as 7-hydroxymitragynine, abbreviated as 7-OH.

I'd like to share my personal story using kratom as well as 7-OH products today. I have suffered with extreme chronic pain every day of my life since 2014. I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and peripheral neuropathy, and started taking natural products including kratom leaf powder to manage pain and fight fatigue. Over the years I beat cancer and had additional health issues and my pain increased. After having discovered 7-OH, I was able to stop using my cane and take on more work hours because I was able to function without excruciating pain, and I wasn't drowsy. It has improved the quality of my life substantially.

But I'm not the only one who has benefited from 7-OH. In addition, The 7-Hope Alliance has collected countless testimonials from 7-OH users who have benefited from using 7-OH products, ranging from pain relief, recovery from substance abuse of more dangerous drugs such as heroin, fentanyl, or oxycontin, and relief from anxiety or depression.

If you compare this to hundreds of thousands of Americans who die each year from alcohol, prescription drugs such as opioid painkillers and benzodiazepines, and illegal drugs such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and even kratom leaf products, the research shows kratom and 7-OH products are much safer.

### Legal Status

I'd like to point out that **The Federal Government & International Agencies have declined to schedule either kratom or 7-OH**, and I'd recommend that this committee also reject a ban.

In October 2016, the **DEA** withdrew its notice of Intent and soliciting comments from the public regarding the scheduling of mitragynine (MG) and 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) under the Controlled Substances Act.

In August 2018, the **United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)** withdrew its recommendation for scheduling kratom, including MG and 7-OH.

“Therefore, I conclude at the current time, available evidence does not support mitragynine and 7- hydroxymitragynine being controlled in Schedule I of the Controlled Substances Act.”  
- Assistant Secretary of Health, Brett Giroir, MD

In December 2021, the **Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD)**, part of the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, concluded there was no evidence to recommend a review of kratom (including MG and 7-OH) for scheduling.

### In Conclusion

**The proposed ban on kratom including 7-OH products is not evidence-based. A ban on kratom not only harms the businesses that make kratom, but consumers of kratom that depend on it to ease chronic pain, stay in recovery from more dangerous opioid painkillers and illegal drugs, and cope with anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).**

**Accordingly, I urge Mayor Burns and councilmembers against banning kratom and 7-OH products in Huntington Beach, CA.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Michele N. Ross, PhD, MBA  
Advisor, 7-HOPE Alliance Foundation  
CEO, Infused Partners LLC