

Testimony in Support of HB 1628

Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Taylor, and I am writing from Ohio to respectfully express my support for HB 1628 and its approach to regulating natural kratom products while preserving access for responsible adults.

Kratom has had a profoundly positive impact on my life.

Years ago, I was struggling with alcohol and heading down a path that could have ended very differently for me. Traditional kratom helped me stop drinking and change the direction of my life. Today, I am a husband, a father, a working member of my community, and someone who cares deeply about ensuring that responsible adults continue to have access to the same option that helped me.

At the same time, I do not believe kratom should exist in an unregulated marketplace.

I support reasonable consumer protections, including age restrictions, accurate labeling, appropriate warnings, responsible packaging, product standards, and meaningful oversight of the products being sold to consumers.

That is why I support the regulatory approach represented by HB 1628.

Allowing traditional kratom to remain legal for adults while prohibiting sales to individuals under 21, requiring appropriate labeling and warnings, restricting packaging designed to appeal to children, and establishing regulatory oversight is a far more responsible approach than simply prohibiting kratom altogether.

Regulation also provides an opportunity to distinguish traditional kratom from the newer generation of isolated, synthetic, or highly concentrated products that have entered the marketplace, particularly products centered around 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH).

That distinction matters.

Traditional kratom leaf and these newer products should not automatically be treated as though they present the same regulatory issue. Concerns surrounding highly concentrated or synthetic derivatives should not become justification for taking traditional kratom away from responsible adults.

I have been involved in this issue in my home state of Ohio, where I have seen firsthand how important it is for policymakers to hear directly from the people whose lives will actually be affected by these decisions.

Behind the statistics and headlines are real people - workers, veterans, parents and ordinary members of our communities.

I am one of them.

I believe HB 1628 demonstrates that protecting consumers and preserving adult access do not have to be competing goals. North Dakota can establish meaningful safeguards, keep these products away from minors, provide consumers with better information, and hold the marketplace accountable without eliminating traditional kratom for responsible adults.

I respectfully encourage you to support HB 1628 and a regulatory framework that protects consumers while preserving access to traditional kratom.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Taylor Norman
Ohio Resident