

IN FULL SUPPORT OF HB 1628

I am in full support of the Kratom Consumer Protection Act. An outright ban would hurt millions of responsible adults. It would force people back onto the streets and turn taxpaying, responsible adults into criminals overnight.

Tennessee's overdose deaths have gone up dramatically since the decision to ban natural, plain-leaf kratom. Responsible regulation is the way to go.

I commend the representatives for presenting this bill rather than passing legislation that could harm their constituents.

I am a 43-year-old woman who was diagnosed with endometriosis and polycystic ovarian syndrome at the age of 23. Those diagnoses came with chronic pain and medication. I was also told that I could not have children, which took away my lifelong dream of becoming a

mother. I was devastated, depressed, and in pain. Medication became my friend. Eventually, the opiates I was prescribed would run out before I was ready for a refill, and I began buying them off the street. I was in a very dark place. My addiction became so serious that my parents would not even let me into their house unsupervised.

Today, my life is completely different. I run my parents' business, cleaning banks—a responsibility I never could have handled during my years of addiction. I am married, I pay taxes, I own a new car, and I have a beautiful home with my husband, my dog, and my cat.

My dog, Emmie, is a two-year-old rescue who came from an abusive home with numerous preexisting health conditions. During my years of addiction, I never would have been able to

take on the responsibility of caring for an animal with her needs. We have had Emmie for a year now. She goes to the park every day, her health issues are under control, and she is thriving.

None of this would have been possible if I had not found kratom.

Kratom gave me the opportunity to change my life. It helped me change the way I think and, over time, I no longer wanted to use substances simply to numb myself. Today, I am happy with the life I have been given. I am incredibly grateful to be alive, especially considering the path I was on.

I am asking for responsible regulations that protect consumers while allowing adults access to kratom. Please keep kratom legal and support regulations such as the Kratom

Consumer Protection Act.

Please consider the people whose lives can be changed when responsible adults have access to regulated, natural kratom.

Respectfully,

Megan Zamorano