

SUPPORT HB 1628

Please Regulate Kratom and Keep Responsible Adult Consumers Legal

I strongly support HB 1628 and its approach of regulating kratom rather than prohibiting it.

Consumers deserve access to clean, accurately labeled, independently tested products. Plain-leaf kratom should remain legal and responsibly sold with appropriate age restrictions, identification requirements, testing, labeling, and retail standards. Highly concentrated, adulterated, or improperly tested products should be appropriately regulated so that consumers can have confidence in what they are purchasing.

I also believe North Dakota should continue to follow the science as research develops and establish reasonable product standards and thresholds based on sound scientific evidence. Regulation should protect consumers while preserving access for responsible adults.

I have lived with chronic pain for decades. I spent nearly 17 years trying to prove my pain was real. Nine and a half years ago, I found plain-leaf kratom powder and it gave me something I'd spent years fighting to get back: the ability to function and participate in my own life.

My fellow advocates and I facilitate conversations and support for people who use kratom, and I hear from people who are afraid of losing their ability to function. These are people who are not looking to get high; they're looking for relief from chronic pain and a way to maintain their quality of life. **These are your constituents.**

They want to work, participate in families, take care of their children, make memories, and live with dignity instead of being defined by their pain.

HB 1628 provides an opportunity to protect those people while addressing legitimate concerns about consumer safety and youth access.

I believe regulation is a responsible path forward.

Please support HB 1628 and protect the ability of responsible adults to continue accessing the products that help them maintain their quality of life.

For peer-reviewed information on kratom and the science surrounding it, please visit **KratomIndex.com**.

Thank you for listening and to the people whose lives will be directly affected by this legislation.

Sincerely,

Venus Usher