

Chairman Klein, Chairman Ruby and members of the committee

Thank you for allowing me to testify today regarding House Bill 1628. My name is Missy Henke and I have served as the Medical Director of the Heartview Foundation in Cando, Dickinson and Bismarck since 2009. I had previously provided testimony to the legislative working group that met a few weeks ago regarding my experience and my concerns surrounding Kratom and 7-OH.

Kratom is a potentially addictive substance and is widely abused. In my line of work, I don't see people who may be benefitting from it. I only see people whose lives are being ruined by this substance and who come to my clinic seeking help to come off of it. I did read submitted testimony from all over the country from people who are apparently finding it to be helpful for them. I strongly support the regulations put forth in House Bill 1628.

Restricting sales to people over 21 and putting it behind the counter makes it less likely that children and teens will have access. Requiring labeling that outlines the potential risks will lessen the likelihood that someone gets blindsided by the addictive nature of this substance. Requiring that Kratom is only the natural leaf or material extracted from kratom leaf using a food-grade solvent eliminates the 7-OH that is so incredibly dangerous. All of these steps are necessary.

I'm not naive enough to believe that this will solve the Kratom issue, but I am appreciative of the effort of this committee to get started on this problem. This bill is a legitimate starting point. It protects our kids. It holds the people selling Kratom accountable for the products on their shelves. It makes sure that marketing is honest and transparent. I'm not sure how feasible the actual regulations are for this bill and if it is fiscally responsible to engage in those types of efforts but I worry that if we can't agree on something, that nothing will be done and we will continue with the same mess we had prior to Governor Armstrong's ban. These regulations are a place to start. They offer a compromise and a compromise is better than nothing.

We will never stay ahead of the people who are looking to make a buck selling products that are addictive and harmful but I think we can send a message that we will not sit back and passively let it happen either. Thank you for your efforts to send that message.

I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.