

This submission is to formally clarify that I am IN FAVOR of HB1628, correcting an accidental 'opposition' click on my previous submission.

My name is Judith Newcomb. I am a 55 year old North Dakota resident, college educated daughter of an Air Force Veteran Officer and I have lived in Minot for over 3 decades. I am a wife, mother, grandmother, and a chronic pain survivor and I am opposing the North Dakota ban of Natural Leaf Kratom.

I originally wanted to present this letter to you in person in Bismarck on Wednesday, September 2, 2026. That is now impossible as of August 5th, 2026 at 5pm CDT. Since Natural Leaf Kratom was looped in with the dangerous, chemically manipulated, 7-OH products, that NEEDED to be banned, I no longer have the option to have pain relief and still be able to drive and function. Now, in order to get any relief, I have to take Percocet or Medical Marijuana. Both majorly restrict my ability to do anything on my own, especially, driving to Bismarck to present this letter.

I developed SLE Lupus in 2004 and was diagnosed with severe degenerative disc disease with spinal stenosis in 2024. The very first symptom of Lupus was extreme arthritis pain in my hands and wrists. Over the next decade, I was put on all kinds of medications to try and slow disease progression, try to make a dent in the constant daily pain, and to try and relieve even some of the extreme exhaustion.

Opiates helped in the beginning for Lupus, but they are not for chronic pain! I was put on Tramadol for 2 years and then switched to Tylenol 4 for 1 year. I couldn't drive due to the effects of the

opiates, my depression was getting worse, my liver enzymes had increased, and my extreme exhaustion was back in full force.

In early 2016, I couldn't take it anymore. I slowly took myself off the Tylenol 4. In the weeks that followed, my quality of life was non-existent. I felt completely defeated and didn't know what to do. What kind of mother and wife was I if I couldn't even get out of bed due to my flare ups?

It was during one of those very hopeless and depressed days that I first learned about Kratom. It was the end of August in 2016 and start of taking my quality of life back!

Just as I had then, and still do, for any substance I take, I majorly researched Kratom and potential vendors. I read all the information about Kratom safety, how to select a trusted vendor, and to NEVER EVER buy it at a gas station due to the possibility of it being adulterated with Tramadol and/or other fillers making it very unsafe.

I ordered a "beginners packet" from a very respected and trusted vendor that tested all their Kratom through an independent laboratory. They posted all the results, which showed no fillers, no adulterations, no salmonella, just 100% ground, dried, Kratom leaves.

The first time I tried Kratom, I knew this was my answer! I could get better pain relief, help with my extreme exhaustion, and still be able to drive? YES!! I FINALLY HAD HOPE AGAIN!

Kratom has the ability to do what no opiate prescription or even medical marijuana can do! I can take a spoonful of Kratom and still drive my car, spend time with my grandkids, and have a completely

clear head so I can be a functioning member of my family and community again! It brings my pain level down from a 10 to a 5, and that is a level I can handle! Even my liver enzymes came down to normal levels where they have remained since I started Kratom.

Keeping Natural Leaf Kratom accessible and safe is VITALLY important so all North Dakota chronic pain patients, wounded Military Veterans, PTSD survivors, alcohol and opiate use disorder patients, and treatment resistant depression patients will have the option of safe and accessible Natural Leaf Kratom.

Thank you for your consideration and time,

Judith Newcomb
Minot, North Dakota