

Dear Members of the House Judiciary,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my perspective on HB 1101. I'm writing as a North Dakotan, a taxpayer, a family provider, and someone living with chronic pain. I'm strongly opposed to the proposed scheduling of mitragynine, aka kratom, and I urge you to vote against it.

Kratom has been essential in helping me manage the debilitating pain caused by a slipped disc. Thanks to kratom, I've been able to hold a steady job, support my family, and stay productive. Without it, I fear I'd have to rely on addictive painkillers or, worse, go on disability a fate I've worked hard to avoid. Banning kratom would take away a natural, effective tool that allows me and countless others to live a better quality of life.

I also want to emphasize that kratom is a plant unadulterated, unmodified, and far from the dangerous substances that often come up in these conversations. It's not a drug in the sense that prescription medications or synthetic substances are. In fact, it's more akin to coffee, which is in the same botanical family. To schedule kratom as though it's a dangerous narcotic is not only inaccurate but frankly absurd. We pride ourselves in North Dakota on being a state of freedom, personal responsibility, and resilience. This bill runs counter to those values and feels like a step in the wrong direction. I cannot support any politician who would strip away my freedom to choose a natural option based on fear-mongering or misinformation.

Finally, let's talk about safety. When used responsibly, kratom is extremely safe. Most reported adverse effects occur when it's mixed with other dangerous substances, like tramadol or illegal drugs. The safety profile of kratom is supported by evidence, and I encourage you to take the time to review it particularly data from independent organizations like the American Kratom Association. Don't rely on pharmaceutical-backed misinformation. Of course, pharmaceutical companies would love to see kratom banned, because it cuts into their profits from opioid sales and addiction treatments. Let's not let their influence dictate public policy in North Dakota.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to look past the fear-driven rhetoric and recognize the benefits kratom provides to people like me people who simply want to live their lives, provide for their families, and manage their health in a safe and responsible way. Please reject HB 1101 and stand for freedom, self-reliance, and informed decision-making.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
W. Bradshaw  
Fargo, North Dakota