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**Chairperson Kleiman**

House Judiciary Committee

North Dakota Legislative Assembly

Dear Chairperson Kleiman and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my opposition to House Bill 1101, which seeks to schedule mitragynine as a schedule I controlled substance. While I understand the importance of ensuring public health and safety, I urge the committee to consider the rapidly evolving science and regulatory trends surrounding botanicals like kratom before moving forward with this legislation.

States across the country, including Colorado, Utah, and Nevada, have already taken steps toward implementing formal regulatory frameworks for kratom to ensure consumer safety while maintaining access for those who rely on its benefits. These frameworks, rooted in science and public health policy, provide a balanced approach that addresses concerns about adulterated products without unnecessarily penalizing consumers or businesses that adhere to safety standards.

I respectfully request that the committee hold a future hearing to examine the science and perspectives of qualified professionals in medicine, toxicology, and regulatory affairs. These experts can provide valuable insights into establishing evidence-based policies that protect public health while ensuring safe access to kratom for consumers who depend on it.

Additionally, I would like to offer my assistance in providing credible information, connecting the committee with leading experts in this field, or arranging private educational meetings to discuss kratom's safety profile, risk factors, and potential for responsible regulation. My goal is to contribute to an informed and balanced decision-making process for the benefit of North Dakotans.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will prioritize evidence-based approaches as you deliberate on this matter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me for further information or to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

Paloma Lehfelddt, MD

Medical Advisor, SABER

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