

My name is Stephen McIntosh.

I am writing in opposition to the bill HB 1101 to criminalize mitragynine (kratom).

This bill will make it impossible for me to visit friends and family, or spend money in the state. It will impact land-based interstate travel.

I am a retired, permanently disabled person. I have constant, significant pain that makes daily life difficult and exacerbate an unrelated, complex, and dangerous health condition (advanced heart failure, cardiomyopathy, etc.) Before my provider began to stop writing prescriptions for narcotic pain management, my pain was well controlled. My pain has been unresponsive to other medications, and many, such as NSAIDs are contraindicated because of other conditions. It is not as effective as my prior Rx, but is sufficient. It has had fewer side effects.

Kratom has been a substantial improvement in quality of life and allowed me to do basic housework, the PT my cardiologist has recommended, and important tasks independently. I have maintained the same dose for over 6 years. I never exceed the daily dose I believe is safe and effective for me.

I, and people like me, should not face criminal sanctions or be excluded from the community/disallowed to travel though the state for safely and responsibly managing our chronic pain that have been underserved by our doctors or who find kratom provides better pain relief or fewer negative side effects.

I have committed no crimes. My use is utterly inconsequential in terms of public safety or public cost. The social and individual impact of all kratom consumers is minuscule compared to legal alcohol or illicit opioid use. No product, including foods and OTC medications are appropriate for all people with all health conditions or sensibilities.

Regulated kratom, such as that to restrict use to 18/21+, forbid adulterated products, require good manufacturing processes, vendor registration, and require labeling can further reduce risk and protect consumers. I would recommend and advocate for a Kratom Consumer Protection Act similar to those passed in Utah, Oregon, Nevada, for example. These regulations are minimally burdensome on consumers and can be implemented at very low or zero cost the state (funded by vendors/licensees) if it is not over-engineered.

I urge you to turn down this bill and for those members with concerns to alternatively consider a regulatory bill that will preserve safe access for adults who rely on this incredibly valuable and in some cases life saving botanical medication.

Thank you.

Stephen McIntosh, MBA
Software Developer (Ret.) and Instructor of Computer Information Systems (Ret.)