

Dear Members of the Ohio House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing to submit formal testimony in strong support of House Bill 587 as it proceeds to its second hearing. I am an informed Ohio resident with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, focused on Counseling. I appreciate the Committee's continued consideration of a regulatory framework that distinguishes between dangerous synthetic derivatives and natural kratom, providing consumer protections while preserving access to this plant for responsible adults.

The Life-Saving and Enabling Role of Natural Kratom

My position is based on my direct experience using natural kratom responsibly to manage a severe, chronic addiction and build a stable, successful life. For thirteen years, I struggled with severe alcohol use disorder, which consumed my life, harmed my health, and destabilized my future. After countless attempts at sobriety through traditional means, responsibly sourced natural kratom provided an invaluable tool for abstinence. I have now remained alcohol-free for over two years. There was a time in my life when I believed this to be impossible and I am very grateful for natural kratom's role in my recovery. For me, kratom was not a replacement addiction; it was a manageable tool that stabilized my life in ways I previously thought impossible.

Since integrating natural kratom into my recovery, I have become highly functional and self-sufficient. I successfully started my own online tutoring business, earning nearly five-star reviews from clients and students. This stability has allowed me to repair relationships and fulfill my responsibilities as a present and supportive member of my family.

Natural kratom has also significantly improved my emotional regulation and anxiety management, enhancing my daily functioning and overall well-being. It has virtually eliminated my desire to consume alcohol, a substance with well-documented and more severe risks than kratom. These changes have been essential to my long-term health, recovery, and personal stability.

My experience aligns with scientific findings and congressional briefings summarized at:

<https://americankratom.org/science>

Hundreds of testimonials from Ohio residents highlight positive impacts on quality of life, including use for PTSD, chronic pain, and recovery support. See Ohio-specific testimonials here:

https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61858fcfc6543059f0617522/61df476a93f7b33fbc563a37_Statement%20Testimonial%20-%20Ohio.pdf

These accounts demonstrate the real-world benefits many Ohioans experience from responsible natural kratom use.

Policy Must Distinguish Between Natural and Synthetic

As discussed in prior testimony, the proposed HB 587 framework recognizes the public health risks of synthetic derivatives, such as 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), while preserving safe access to natural kratom leaf. Most reported fatalities associated with kratom involve adulterated products, synthetic derivatives, or other substances — not natural kratom used responsibly. Criminalizing the natural leaf would unnecessarily penalize Ohioans who rely on it for health and recovery.

State-level Kratom Consumer Protection Acts in states such as **Utah, Arizona, and Georgia** provide examples of responsible regulation: mandatory testing, strict 7-OH limits, age restrictions, and proper labeling. HB 587 provides Ohio with an opportunity to adopt a similar evidence-based, consumer-protective approach — addressing safety concerns while preserving the demonstrable benefits of natural kratom.

For me personally, natural kratom has been a life-changing, stabilizing tool that facilitated recovery, personal growth, and productive engagement in my family and community. As you evaluate this bill during its second hearing, I respectfully ask that you continue distinguishing between synthetic compounds and the natural leaf, and pursue informed regulation rather than criminalization.

Why Regulation Makes Sense

Low Toxicity

CDC data shows that in an analysis of over 27,000 overdose deaths, kratom was identified as the sole substance in only 7 cases (0.03%).

<https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/kratom>

Biased Agonism (Reduced Respiratory Risk)

Frontiers in Pharmacology (2024) confirms that mitragynine acts as a “biased agonist” and does not recruit beta-arrestin — the signaling pathway most associated with respiratory depression in classical opioids.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/pharmacology/articles/10.3389/fphar.2024.1403140/full>

WHO Review (2021)

The World Health Organization’s Expert Committee on Drug Dependence concluded there was insufficient evidence to recommend international scheduling of kratom or its primary alkaloids.

<https://ecddrepository.org/en/kratom-mitragynine-7-hydroxymitragynine>

Johns Hopkins (2024/2025)

Recent peer-reviewed research from **Johns Hopkins University** found many adults who use kratom report improved daily productivity and quality of life measures following a typical dose. <https://pure.johnshopkins.edu/en/publications/responses-to-a-typical-morning-dose-of-kratom-in-people-who-use-k/>

Distinct Pharmacology from Classical Opioids

Clinical Chemistry (Oxford Academic) explains how kratom alkaloids differ structurally and pharmacologically from traditional opioids, highlighting important safety profile distinctions. <https://academic.oup.com/clinchem/article/66/2/316/5716183>

American Kratom Association Science Hub
<https://americankratom.org/science>

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration as HB 587 advances through the legislative process. I appreciate the Committee's willingness to examine the evidence and consider the lived experiences of Ohio residents.

Sincerely,
Angela Mangeri