

## Witness Statement

Date: 02-04-63

Name: Lesley Tice -Thomas

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Niles, Ohio 44446

Bill: Support House Bill 587 – Proponent Testimony (written)

To Chairman Klopfenstein, Vice Chair Newman, Ranking Member Miller, and members of the House Agriculture Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in strong support of House Bill 587.

My name is Lesley Tice -Thomas, and I am a resident of Niles, Ohio. I am writing to you today as a proponent of this legislation because I believe Ohioans deserve safe, regulated access to natural kratom.

I personally use plain leaf kratom because I'm 63 years old and I have chronic pain and had no life. Every day was a struggle to get out of bed. I have arthritis and inoperable back issues, bone on bone knees. When pain management failed me, I saw an ad on Facebook and I got a sample three years ago. It has been a godsend, truly with no side effects. It helps me manage my daily life and has significantly improved my quality of life. Before finding natural kratom, I was in misery and despair.

Keeping natural leaf kratom legal is essential to me because I depend on it for pain relief but also anxiety and my depression. I can now laugh and smile and have my mobility and independence back.

I support HB 587 specifically because it creates necessary standards to ensure that the products I rely on are:

Pure and Safe: Free from dangerous synthetic additives or contaminants.

Accurately Labeled: So I know exactly what I am purchasing.

Regulated: Establishing age limits and oversight by the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

This legislation is a responsible path forward that protects consumers like me while removing "insidiously dangerous" synthetic compounds from the market. I respectfully urge the committee to pass House Bill 587.

Thank you for your time and for considering my story.

Sincerely,

Lesley Tice -Thomas

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