

To: Members of the Ohio House Agriculture Committee

Date: 03/02/2026

My name is Mark Medrano. I am not an attorney, but I am submitting this testimony as a responsible consumer, employee in the kratom industry, and supporter of reasonable regulation rather than criminalization of natural botanical products.

I strongly support *H.B. 587* — a bill that would establish a regulatory framework for kratom products in Ohio and help preserve safe access to natural kratom. I oppose any effort to classify natural kratom as an illegal substance without appropriate regulation.

Natural kratom, when used responsibly by adults, has been safe in my personal life and in the lives of many others across the United States. I consume kratom socially 1–2 times per month, have no addiction issues, and believe adults should retain the right to choose what they consume without fear of criminal penalties.

I am also employed by a kratom manufacturer that operates responsibly and in compliance with applicable state laws. If natural kratom were to be broadly banned or criminalized — as is being pursued in other parts of the country through emergency rules by the Ohio Board of Pharmacy — it would directly impact my livelihood and the livelihoods of many others who work in this sector. As we've seen in Ohio, emergency rules have already banned synthetic and derivative kratom products and are seeking to schedule natural kratom as a controlled substance, potentially creating felony penalties for possession and sale.

H.B. 587 offers a balanced alternative. From what has been shared publicly, the bill would:

- Define kratom and kratom products clearly, including plain leaf and extracts manufactured with food-grade solvents;
- Establish registration, testing, and labeling standards ensuring product quality and consumer safety;
- Protect access to natural kratom leaf while restricting unsafe or high-alkaloid products.

This approach mirrors state kratom consumer protection laws such as those in Arizona and Utah, where balanced regulation has been effective without resorting to criminalization. I have personally seen how the kratom regulatory framework protects consumers while maintaining safe access. Criminalizing an entire class of botanical products based on misinformation would harm responsible adults, veterans, and seniors who rely on this plant, as well as small businesses and families who depend on this industry.

I encourage members of this committee to support *H.B. 587* as a constructive path forward — one that ensures accountability, protects public health, and prevents the unnecessary criminalization of natural kratom. Written testimony like this becomes part of the permanent legislative record and can help lawmakers understand the real, personal impact of policy decisions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Mark Medrano