

Chairman, Vice Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my testimony.

My name is Natalie De Vere, and I am the Director of Operations for Miracle Kratom, an Ohio small business that my husband and I have operated for the past nine years selling only natural kratom leaf products. We do not sell enhanced extracts, concentrated alkaloids, or synthetic products. We sell plain leaf kratom.

I am here in strong support of H.B. 587 because Ohio is long overdue for clear, consistent, science-based regulation on kratom products.

For years, kratom has existed in a legal regulatory gray area in Ohio. Since around 2018, the Ohio Department of Agriculture has taken the position that kratom may be sold in Ohio, but not for human consumption. That means businesses are discouraged from including warning labels or dosage guidance on products that are clearly being consumed by adults.

As a business owner, that puts us in an impossible position. We believe responsible labeling and consumer information reduces risk. Yet under current interpretations by the ODA, including those warnings could subject a business to embargo. That is not sound public health policy.

H.B. 587 corrects that.

It establishes labeling standards, age restrictions, and product safety requirements. It brings transparency to a marketplace that has operated in uncertainty. Our neighboring state Kentucky, which we also operate a kratom only retail store, has already implemented these exact regulations since July of 2024.

I also want to address an issue that has increasingly shaped the narrative around kratom: 7-hydroxymitragynine, or 7-OH.

It is critical to understand that 7-OH is a singular alkaloid found naturally in trace amounts of the kratom leaf. It is not "kratom." However, in recent years, high-potency synthetic or manipulated alkaloid products have entered the marketplace and have been advertised and sold as kratom.

These products are fundamentally different from natural leaf products.

When data is presented about isolated 7-OH or concentrated extracts, it is often characterized as though it represents traditional kratom. That is scientifically inaccurate. H.B. 587 recognizes this distinction by capping 7-OH levels and banning concentrated synthetic alkaloids. That is exactly where regulatory focus belongs.

I also want to briefly address federal oversight.

In August of 2024, our company was visited by the FDA following a reported death in Ohio. According to the autopsy report, this was due to acute combined drug effects.

The FDA conducted an investigation of our operations. We provided Certificates of Analysis, product labeling, and documentation of our current Good Manufacturing Practices. We do not make medical claims. We follow dietary supplement manufacturing standards.

After their investigation, no enforcement action was taken against our company.

I share this not defensively, but to demonstrate that responsible operators exist in this space, and that regulation works when it is applied appropriately.

Kratom is not FDA-approved as a drug and cannot be marketed or sold bearing medical claims. It currently exists in the dietary supplement or food category federally. That federal ambiguity has allowed states like Ohio to remain in a gray area. H.B. 587 gives Ohio the opportunity to create clarity rather than confusion.

On a personal level, I would not have dedicated nearly a decade of my life and career to this industry if I believed it was harming communities. I have witnessed firsthand the positive role natural kratom has played for responsible adults, including within my own family. Like many Ohio families, mine has been touched by addiction. I am not naïve to risk, nearly everything carries a level of risk, but policy should be based on proportionate, evidence-based regulation, not stigma or selective interpretation of data.

Ohio has an opportunity here.

We can regulate responsibly. We can distinguish natural plant products from novel synthetics. We can require labeling, purity testing, and age restrictions. And we can protect adult access while prioritizing public safety.

H.B. 587 does exactly that.

I respectfully urge this committee to support H.B. 587 and move Ohio from regulatory ambiguity to a clear, balanced framework that protects consumers and responsible businesses alike.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Natalie DeVere

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