

S

To: Marco Rubio, Kathy Castor, Rick Scott, Kellyanne Conway, President Donald Trump,

White House

By mail and electronic mail

Hello,

Let me start off by expressing my appreciation for your time and consideration on this matter.

I am writing you in regards to the possible schedule 1 ban on the plant called Kratom. Hopefully, you know about this issue already and I don't need to go into what Kratom is.

I, like millions of other Americans am an avid user of Kratom. I take Kratom for chronic pain. Years ago I was in quite a bad car accident that totaled my car. My car was T-boned, so the impact affected my right side. Specifically, in my neck and shoulder (C4 & C5). I visit a pain management doctor monthly. I've even had 4 procedures done and all have been unsuccessful. Unfortunately, due to the recent prescription pain medication federal cut back, I like many other legitimate pain management patients, have been affected by this change. I see a very legitimate and above board doctor, and have legitimate chronic pain that affects my everyday life, and sometimes have to go without medication due to these changes in the law.

Two years ago the DEA tried to schedule Kratom. However, due to the large number of support and outreach by advocates, the ban didn't happen. In fact, over 22,000 comments (an all time record) were left on the DEA open comments page. Roughly 99% of them were success stories of long time users and were not in favor of the ban. Those comments are now archived. There is some absolutely amazing stories including many from Veterans, and healthcare professionals.

Kratom has helped me with my pain management. What I am not understanding, is that the government is interfering with patients getting their medication, and when a natural plant is helping them, the government wants to ban that too? Which one is it? Should we try a natural plant or be able to get medication from our doctor? We don't like living in pain, nor do we like having to take medication and being treated like abusers.

The FDA is citing the recent salmonella outbreaks from specific vendors as one of their focal points of their campaign in efforts to issue a blanket ban on Kratom. To be quite honest, the "outbreaks" they're referring to are extremely minuscule. Especially compared to the food we eat everyday.

FDA commissioner Scott Gottlieb constantly tweeting articles about "Kratom overdoses" from small, local news outlets citing them as factual. Why is he not tweeting about the positive articles and testimonies? Unfortunately, he has a bias towards Kratom. That is shown in the FDA letters released by The American Kratom Association.

The American Kratom Association released a detailed report on the deaths that Kratom has supposedly caused. A large amount of the deaths show a number of other drugs or alcohol in the descendant's toxicity report or information from the next of kin. It's extremely sad the FDA would use these individuals' deaths to fuel their narrative by distorting the facts.

As you may know, when something is placed on the schedule 1 list, it's extremely difficult (almost impossible) to perform studies or research on. The FDA claims there is "no medical benefit" to Kratom. However, the number of independent studies and surveys done show that Kratom offers mood boost, energy, pain relief among many other benefits. I believe those studies are blatantly being ignored.

Mark Swogger (Ph.D) did a systemic review on Kratom for DrugandAlcoholDependence.com that included a comprehensive, systematic review of all studies on Kratom use published between January 1960 and July 2017. Findings indicate Kratom is a "harm reduction tool" and "enhances mood and relieves anxiety among many users".

Also in the same report, Zach Walsh, Ph.D., associate Psychology professor at the University of British Columbia stated the following; "We need to explore all options, and our findings suggest it's time to carefully examine the potential of this ancient plant".

The American Kratom Association has sent countless letters and requests for a meeting with FDA commissioner Scott Gottlieb and members of the scientific community that have performed these independent studies. Those requests continue to be ignored. I would hope the FDA wants to know all the facts and hear the science behind Kratom before issuing a ban.

In conclusion; Kratom helps million of people in American and has been used for thousands of years. As with anything, there is a risk, including Coffee, Alcohol, Cigarettes even Tylenol. But we don't ban these things, we educate people, advise caution and let them use their own judgement in the things they use for their personal well being and everyday routines. We in the Kratom community are asking the FDA to regulate Kratom and apply the same requirements in standard as other supplements on the market.

Respectfully yours,

Nicolas Bowling
Founder and head journalist of RealNSE.com



Reference links:

A systemic review of the use of Kratom

- [https://www.drugandalcoholdependence.com/article/S0376-8716\(17\)30558-6/fulltext](https://www.drugandalcoholdependence.com/article/S0376-8716(17)30558-6/fulltext)

AKA's report on the "Kratom deaths"

- https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_c4de172860754c0a8db2d3adf2f4e12e.pdf

AKA letter to FDA

- https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/9ba5da_514be02210e34de290018153d275b546.pdf

Comments submitted to DEA - <https://www.regulations.gov/docket?D=DEA-2016-0015>

<http://speciosa.org/over-22000-comments-on-deas-kratom-ban/>

D.E.A. Kratom Research: 99.1% in favor of Kratom

- <https://www.canadakratomexpress.com/single-post/2017/02/02/Review-of-DEAs-Public-Comments-on-Kratom-shows-strong-support-from-Vets-Doctors-Cops-and-Seniors>

Science and facts about Kratom - <https://www.americankratom.org/science>