

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2016

The Honorable Charles P. Rosenberg
Administrator (Acting)
Drug Enforcement Administration
Lincoln Place-West
700 Army Navy Drive
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Acting Administrator Rosenberg:

We write with concern about your agency's proposed regulatory decision to utilize section 201 of the Controlled Substance Act (CSA) to temporarily place Mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine, more commonly known as kratom, into schedule I of the CSA. We urge your agency to delay a final decision on the placement of kratom as a Schedule I, provide ample time for public comment on this significant decision, and resolve any inconsistencies with other Federal Agencies regarding the use of kratom.

As our nation continues to combat the public health crisis of opioid abuse, the federal government has invested significant resources to develop alternative pain management strategies. This includes a study funded by the National Institutes of Health in partnership with the University of Massachusetts and the University of Mississippi to investigate the use of kratom as a remedy for opioid withdrawal. This study led the researchers to apply for a patent identifying the kratom extract, mitragynine, as a useful treatment for other addictive drugs besides opiate derivatives. The DEA's decision to place kratom as a Schedule I substance will put a halt on federally funded research and innovation surrounding the treatment of individuals suffering from opioid and other addictions—a significant public health threat.

DEA's Federal Register notice posted on August 31, 2016 proposes placing kratom in the most restrictive category- Schedule I- within 30 days. This significant regulatory action was done without any opportunity for public comment from researchers, consumers, and other stakeholders. This hasty decision could have serious effects on consumer access and choice of an internationally recognized herbal supplement.

We urge the DEA to delay finalizing the decision to define kratom as a Schedule I substance under the Controlled Substances Act and to engage consumers, researchers, and other stakeholders, in keeping with well-established protocol for such matters. A departure from such guidelines threatens the transparency of the scheduling process and its responsiveness to the input of both citizens and the scientific community. We look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

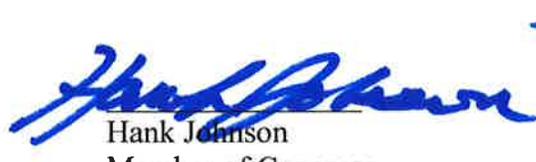


Mark Pocan
Member of Congress

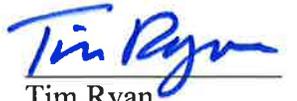


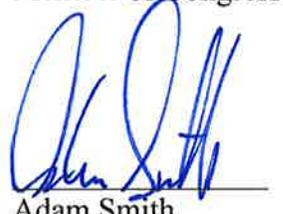
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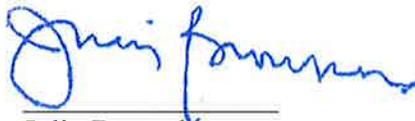
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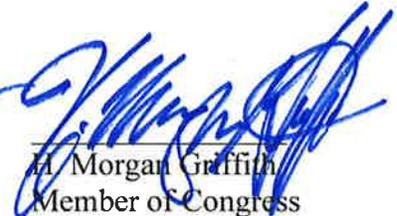
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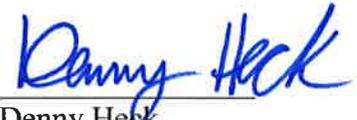
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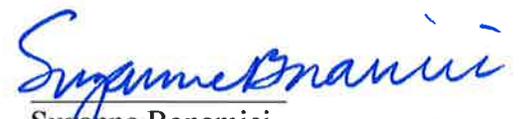
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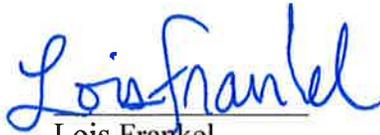
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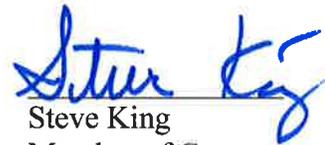
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