



AMERICAN KRATOM ASSOCIATION

Protecting Consumer Access to Safe, Natural Kratom
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American Kratom Association Strongly Supports Connor's End Gas Station Heroin Act

AKA urges Congress to move swiftly to remove dangerous synthetic products from store shelves and establish strong enforcement against those who manufacture and distribute products that harm our kids

WASHINGTON, D.C. — September 26, 2026 — The American Kratom Association strongly supports Connor's End Gas Station Heroin Act and calls on Congress to move swiftly to remove dangerous synthetic 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), mitragynine pseudoindoxyl, MGM-15, and MGM-16 products from the marketplace. The legislation was introduced September 24 by Sen. Bernie Moreno (S. 5383) in the Senate and Rep. Lance Gooden (H.R. 10272) in the House.

The AKA warns that these products threaten to fuel the next wave of the opioid epidemic. Their sale in gas stations and smoke shops — including products masquerading as natural kratom leaf, cat's claw, coffee, and akuamma tree alkaloids — demands an urgent response focused on preventing overdoses and saving lives.

"Congress cannot wait for more families to lose someone they love," said Mac Haddow, Senior Fellow on Public Policy for the American Kratom Association. "Dangerous synthetic opioids are being sold in everyday retail settings where consumers can mistake availability for safety. We need Connor's End Gas Station Heroin Act to help get these products out of gas stations and smoke shops and stop an emerging crisis from claiming more lives."

Reports of fatal overdoses linked to these synthetic products continue to mount. Those deaths underscore the urgency of removing dangerous products and preventing further loss of life.

The AKA is calling for decisive action against synthetic and chemically manipulated opioid products, including synthetic or enhanced 7-OH and the related compounds mitragynine pseudoindoxyl, MGM-15, and MGM-16. Manufacturers and distributors must not be permitted to misrepresent or obscure what they are selling or the risks consumers face.

"Natural kratom leaf must not become a marketing disguise for powerful synthetic opioid products," Haddow said. "The priority is getting these dangerous products off the shelves before another family receives a devastating phone call. Congress must act with the urgency that preventable deaths demand."

Natural kratom leaf consumers have been victimized by the deliberately deceptive marketing tactics of synthetic manufacturers who market their deadly opioids as nothing more than natural kratom. These

products are full-blown opioids that have trapped hundreds of thousands of consumers in addiction and put every one of those 7-OH consumers at risk of an overdose death.

The AKA urges Congress to pair swift action against these products with strong, enforceable regulations that include independent testing, manufacturing standards, accurate ingredient labeling, and product traceability. Regulators must have clear authority to recall and remove noncompliant products, backed by meaningful penalties for manufacturers and distributors that deliberately adulterate products or mislead consumers.

"Removing today's dangerous products is only part of the job," Haddow said. "Congress must also stop companies from introducing the next chemically manipulated product under deceptive labeling. Congress must draw a clear line, give regulators the tools to enforce it, and establish meaningful accountability for companies that cross it."

The AKA urges congressional leaders and the committees of jurisdiction to advance the legislation without delay and enact comprehensive consumer protections for the natural kratom marketplace. On behalf of the more than 24 million Americans who consume natural kratom leaf, the AKA thanks Sen. Moreno and Rep. Gooden for their leadership and encourages swift passage.

Background: Connor Neeleman, son of David and Eva Neeleman, died of a 7-OH overdose at the age of 26 after taking a highly concentrated synthetic 7-OH product deceptively marketed as kratom that he had received at a vape shop in Texas. Following his death, his parents began publicly advocating for stricter regulations on 7-OH and synthetic kratom products.

About the American Kratom Association

The American Kratom Association is a consumer advocacy organization committed to protecting access to safe, natural kratom leaf products and advancing science-based consumer protection standards. AKA supports age restrictions, accurate labeling, contaminant testing, good manufacturing practices, and strong enforcement against adulterated, mislabeled, synthetic, semi-synthetic, concentrated, fortified, or chemically manipulated products falsely marketed as kratom.

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