



AMERICAN KRATOM ASSOCIATION

Protecting Consumer Access to Safe, Natural Kratom
press@americankratom.org | americankratom.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AKA Urges Mississippi Attorney General Fitch to Amend Kratom Ban Recommendation

AKA asks the Attorney General to join Lafayette County investigators in targeting dangerous synthetic opioids while preserving regulated access to natural kratom

WASHINGTON, D.C. — October 1, 2026 — The American Kratom Association today sent a letter to Mississippi Attorney General Lynn Fitch urging her to amend her call for a statewide ban on all kratom and instead support legislation specifically prohibiting dangerous synthetic and chemically manipulated opioid products.

The request follows an important clarification from the Lafayette County Metro Narcotics Unit, the agency investigating the recent deaths of two University of Mississippi students.

The Unit emphasized that its initial warning about kratom “was not a declaration that kratom or any specific substance caused either death” and that investigators are awaiting autopsy and toxicology findings before determining what substances, if any, contributed to the deaths.

More importantly, Lafayette County investigators are now calling on the Mississippi Legislature to address synthetic kratom-related products, specifically citing the federal government’s Schedule I action against mitragynine pseudoindoxyl (MGPI), MGM-15 and MGM-16. Investigators acknowledged that the federal action targeted those manufactured compounds rather than imposing Schedule I control on traditional botanical kratom.

“We strongly support the Lafayette County Metro Narcotics Unit’s call for immediate legislative action against these dangerous synthetic opioid products,” said Mac Haddow, Senior Fellow on Public Policy for the American Kratom Association. “We are asking Attorney General Fitch to refine her recommendation so Mississippi targets the substances that actually present this emerging public-safety threat rather than banning natural kratom leaf.”

Court documents in the Ole Miss investigations have identified SMAX Pseudo-DHM pills, described by investigators as a chemically manipulated product, as the product reportedly purchased by both students before their deaths. The causes of death have not been determined, and investigators continue to await complete toxicology and autopsy findings.

“This investigation demonstrates exactly why precision matters,” Haddow said. “The answer to synthetic opioids being marketed under the kratom name is not to ban the natural botanical. Ban the synthetic opioids. Give law enforcement the authority to remove them from store shelves. Punish those who illegally manufacture and sell them. And responsibly regulate natural kratom.”

The AKA letter urges Attorney General Fitch to align Mississippi policy with the distinctions already made by the FDA, HHS and the DEA between natural botanical kratom and enhanced, chemically manipulated or synthetic compounds.

The AKA also pledged its full support for the legislative hearings requested by the Lafayette County Metro Narcotics Unit and offered Mississippi officials scientific expertise, laboratory standards, testing protocols and model statutory language.

“Attorney General Fitch and the American Kratom Association share the same fundamental objective — protecting Mississippi consumers from dangerous products,” Haddow said. “The emerging evidence gives us an opportunity to work together on legislation that precisely targets the threat.”

“Mississippi should separate the natural botanical from the synthetic opioids,” Haddow added. “Regulate natural kratom products responsibly. Prohibit and aggressively enforce against the chemically manipulated and synthetic opioids.”

Video of the AKA’s September 30 press conference in Oxford, Mississippi, is available at <https://youtu.be/UyJyARPTw24>.

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.

Media Contact

Mac Haddow
Senior Fellow on Public Policy, American Kratom Association
press@americankratom.org
+1 571-294-5978