



AMERICAN KRATOM ASSOCIATION

Protecting Consumer Access to Safe, Natural Kratom
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American Kratom Association Applauds DEA and Department of Justice for Protecting Consumers Through Targeted Scheduling of 7-OH and Mitragynine Pseudoindoxyl

Resolution of AKA litigation reinforces the critical distinction between chemically manipulated opioid products and natural kratom leaf, protecting consumer safety and lawful access

WASHINGTON, D.C. — October 9, 2026 — The American Kratom Association applauds the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the U.S. Department of Justice for recognizing the importance of establishing specific scheduling thresholds for 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH) and mitragynine pseudoindoxyl that distinguish chemically manipulated opioid products from properly formulated natural kratom leaf products. ([see DOJ Release](#))

AKA also welcomes the resolution of its litigation challenging the potential unintended consequences of the federal scheduling action involving mitragynine pseudoindoxyl. The litigation sought to ensure that federal drug-control policies targeting dangerous, chemically manipulated substances would not inadvertently criminalize natural kratom products containing incidental trace amounts of compounds associated with the plant's alkaloid chemistry.

"This is an important victory for science, sound public policy, and the millions of Americans who rely on responsibly manufactured natural kratom products," said Mac Haddow, Senior Fellow on Public Policy for the American Kratom Association. "The DEA and the Department of Justice deserve recognition for addressing the critical distinction between dangerous, chemically manipulated opioid products and natural kratom leaf. That distinction is essential to protecting consumers without imposing an unjustified ban on lawful botanical products."

Targeted Scheduling Protects Consumers Without Unnecessarily Restricting Natural Kratom

AKA has consistently supported appropriate federal action against products containing chemically manipulated or synthetically enhanced concentrations of 7-OH and related opioid compounds, which present materially different risks from traditional natural kratom leaf.

However, AKA has also emphasized that scheduling actions must be carefully defined to avoid encompassing natural kratom products simply because sensitive laboratory testing may detect trace amounts of certain alkaloids or related compounds.

The establishment of scientifically justified thresholds provides a more precise regulatory approach that focuses enforcement on products of concern while preserving access to natural kratom leaf and properly formulated products that comply with applicable standards.

"Federal drug policy should target the substances and product formulations that actually create the risk," Haddow said. "It should not punish consumers or responsible manufacturers because a scheduling

order fails to distinguish a deliberately manufactured opioid compound from the incidental trace constituents of a natural botanical product.”

A Model for Responsible State Regulation

AKA urges state legislatures, attorneys general, and public health agencies to follow the federal government’s scientifically targeted approach rather than adopting sweeping prohibitions that fail to distinguish natural kratom products from chemically manipulated opioid substances.

State laws should incorporate appropriate concentration thresholds, objective laboratory testing standards, and clear protections for natural kratom products that comply with responsible manufacturing and labeling requirements.

AKA also calls on responsible manufacturers to support rigorous product standards, including accurate alkaloid disclosure, appropriate serving sizes, independent testing, and quality controls that preserve the natural alkaloid profile of kratom leaf.

“The message to state policymakers should be unmistakable,” Haddow concluded. “We can aggressively restrict dangerous, chemically manipulated opioid products while preserving access to responsibly manufactured natural kratom. Consumer protection and consumer access are not competing objectives. With scientifically sound standards, we can accomplish both.”

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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