



# RHODE ISLAND MEDICAL SOCIETY

Chairperson Joseph Solomon  
House Corporations Committee  
Rhode Island House of Representatives  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

2024-HB 7231

OPPOSE

March 14, 2024

Dear Chairperson Solomon:

As representatives of the Rhode Island Medical Society (RIMS), we submit this testimony urging opposition to H 7231, the "An Act Relating to Food and Drugs -- Kratom Consumer Protection Act." Established in 1812, RIMS stands as the eighth oldest medical society in the United States, committed to upholding the highest standards of medical practice and patient care within our state.

The proposed legislation seeks to authorize and regulate the distribution of Kratom, a product that has garnered considerable controversy regarding its safety and efficacy. Kratom, known for its opioid and stimulant properties, remains a substance of concern among medical professionals, public health advocates, and addiction treatment specialists alike.

Our opposition to this bill stems from several key reasons:

- **Safety Concerns:** The safety profile of Kratom remains dubious, with reports of adverse effects and potential risks associated with its use. Without adequate regulation and oversight, there is a significant risk to public health and safety.
- **Efficacy Uncertainty:** Despite claims of its effectiveness, the scientific evidence supporting the therapeutic benefits of Kratom is lacking. Rigorous scientific investigation is necessary to determine its efficacy and potential clinical applications.
- **Addiction and Dependency:** Kratom's opioid-like properties raise concerns regarding the potential for addiction and dependency among users. Without proper regulation, there is a risk of exacerbating the ongoing opioid crisis in Rhode Island.

Given these concerns, we urge the committee to oppose H 7231 and refrain from authorizing the distribution of Kratom until further scientific research and evidence-based assessments are conducted. The health and well-being of Rhode Island residents must remain paramount in any legislative decision concerning novel substances like Kratom.

We stand ready to provide any additional information or address any questions you may have regarding our testimony. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we trust that you will prioritize the safety and welfare of our community in your deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Smith, MD, MPH  
President