

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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JOHN R. EPLEE, MD
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HB 2188

Thank you, Mr Chairman and fellow members of the Fed and State Committee.

I rise in support of HB 2188 as an actual extension of HB 2084 under consideration today also. This was a bill that passed out of committee in 2021 and to the committee as a whole without action. This bill simply outlines more definitions, rules, and regulations as it applies to the appropriate Department of Agriculture. Historically, it was apparent that after we placed Kratom on the list of legal substances in Kansas 5 years ago, there has never been adequate/appropriate regulation of this substance.

Mitragyna speciosa is a tropical evergreen tree in the coffee family native to Southeast Asia. It is indigenous to Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and Papua New Guinea. It has been used as an herbal medicine for over 100 years. Historically it has been used as a medication to fight fatigue and improve work productivity. But it also has properties as a narcotic substitute medication and has been used quite successfully to treat patients with narcotic addiction. It has been studied and found to have a wide therapeutic window.

Your Kansas Legislature has already had the debate about the safety and efficacy of this substance and concluded that it is safe and appropriate in many clinical settings as a food substrate. My testimony today is not to question or change that action. BUT there was no regulation of this food substrate when it was made available to Kansas residents 5 years ago. This herbal substrate needs to be regulated for sure.

Both of these bills under consideration today have merit to accomplish the above goal of appropriate regulation of Kratom sales in the State. I do feel that HB 2188 does a better job of laying the framework for the Dept of Agriculture going forward.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Eplee". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the text "Thank you for your kind consideration.".