

Idaho Society of Addiction Medicine

A Chapter of American Society of Addiction Medicine

March 27, 2027

Dear Idaho Legislature,

On behalf of the Idaho Society of Addiction Medicine, representing addiction medicine physicians, advanced practice providers and allied health professionals dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment in Idaho, we thank you for your support in preventing and treating addiction. We write today to express our support for SB1418 as an important first step in providing much needed regulation of the sale of kratom in Idaho.

Pharmacologically, kratom is an opioid. Like other opioids, kratom derives pain-relieving properties from its activity at the mu opioid receptor in the brain. It also carries grave risk for addiction and overdose, both of which can be treated successfully with available medications for opioid use disorder (such as buprenorphine and methadone) and opioid overdose (such as naloxone or Narcan). However, unlike most other opioids, the sale of kratom is currently unregulated, resulting in many Idahoans becoming unwittingly addicted to a substance that is readily available without warning labels.

According to data from Poison Control Centers, Idaho has the highest rate of kratom exposure in the United States. This means the number of Idahoans currently dependent on kratom is significant. A full ban would abruptly force many of these individuals into withdrawal. We know from experience with the opioid epidemic this would lead to an increase in demand for illicit opioids and overdoses. For this reason, we have concerns about a full ban.

We advocate instead for rational regulation targeting harm reduction initiatives including a ban on highly concentrated products such as 7-hydroxymitragine (7-OH) in addition to regulating the sale of kratom by establishing a legal age limit of 21 and bolstering the requirement for warning labels on packaging, both of which are provided in this bill.

To those who have experienced the very real harms caused by the unregulated sale of kratom, we acknowledge there is more work to be done. The Idaho Society of Addiction Medicine is committed to working with families, law enforcement, and the medical community to further strengthen regulation and promote public awareness of the harms associated with kratom use as well as available treatment options going forward.

Until then, we support SB1418 as an important first step towards regulation of kratom in Idaho.

Sincerely,



Norm Litchfield, MD, FASAM
President, IDSAM