



I am writing to personally offer my strongest support for legislation that would prohibit the retail sale of *kratom* throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Kratom is often marketed as a harmless herbal supplement, but in reality, it has caused devastating harm in communities across our state and nation. Law enforcement officers, healthcare providers, and families in the Commonwealth have witnessed firsthand the destructive effects this unregulated substance can have on individuals' lives—leading to addiction, job loss, family breakdown, and, in some cases, tragic loss of life.

Allowing kratom to be sold openly in gas stations and smoke shops undermines efforts to assist those suffering from substance abuse. It sends a dangerous message to our youth that addictive and mind-altering substances can be casually purchased alongside everyday consumer goods.

Virginia has an obligation to protect its citizens, especially our young people and most vulnerable residents from substances that have no legitimate medical purpose and carry serious public health risks. I agree with you that we need to ban the retail sale of kratom statewide.

Together, we can stand for safer, stronger, and healthier communities across Virginia.

Sincerely,

J. Harrison Cluff

Mayor, Town of Orange