



**Rhode Island Pharmacists Association**  
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[submitted electronically via: [HouseCorporations@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseCorporations@rilegislature.gov)]

The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Corporations  
Representative Joseph J. Solomon, Jr., Chair  
Representative William W. O'Brien, First Vice Chair  
Representative Justine A. Caldwell, Second Vice Chair  
Rhode Island State House  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Re: SUPPORT - H7518 (McGaw), AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS – THE RHODE ISLAND KRATOM ACT

Chair Solomon and members of the Corporations Committee:

We are writing to support H7518, which would amend the Rhode Island Kratom Act to keep all kratom products within a locked case until the product is sold.

Kratom products contain substances, primarily mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH, with opioid receptor activity). This means that they have the same kinds of effects as opioids like hydrocodone. While some individuals use kratom for pain or self-management of opioid withdrawal, it is NOT an FDA-approved medication, nor an approved supplement. National poison center data document respiratory depression, seizures, liver toxicity, and overdose when kratom is combined with other sedating agents. ([Anwar M, Law R, Schier J. MMWR 2016;65:748–749.](#))

Although access to kratom is restricted to adults 21 years old+, in the absence of behind the pharmacy counter controls comparable to nicotine replacement therapies, kratom may be displayed in environments that enable youth access. **Requiring storage in a locked cabinet is a common-sense public health safeguard that reduces underage access without prohibiting adult purchase.**

RIPA supports Rhode Island's strong history of pragmatic harm-reduction regulation—balancing access with safety through structured dispensing models for medications and controlled substances. A locked-cabinet requirement aligns kratom retail practices with risk-based product stewardship. It preserves adult autonomy while promoting point-of-sale age verification and trained sales staff engagement. This approach is minimally burdensome to retailers, straightforward to enforce, and responsive to the state's ongoing efforts to reduce substance-related morbidity and mortality. **In short, secure kratom storage is a measured, evidence-informed step to mitigate foreseeable harms while broader federal regulatory clarity evolves.**

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Bratberg, PharmD, FAPhA - **On Behalf of Himself**  
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*Affiliated with the American Pharmacists Association and the  
National Community Pharmacists Association*