



Rhode Island Pharmacists Association
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[submitted electronically via: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov]

The Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Senator Melissa A. Murray, Chair
Senator Pamela J. Lauria, Vice Chair
Senator Lori Urso, Secretary
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: SUPPORT - S2457 (Lauria), AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS – THE RHODE ISLAND KRATOM ACT

Chair Murray and members of the Committee:

We are writing to support S2457, 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 pharmacologically active alkaloids (primarily mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine) with opioid receptor activity. While some individuals report using kratom for pain or self-management of opioid withdrawal, it is NOT an FDA-approved medication. National poison center data document increasing reports of adverse events, including respiratory depression, seizures, hepatotoxicity, and polysubstance overdose when kratom is combined with other sedating agents. (Anwar M, Law R, Schier J. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2016;65:748–749.)

Although access to kratom is age-restricted to adults 21 years old and older, in the absence of behind-the-pharmacy-counter controls comparable to nicotine replacement therapies, kratom may be displayed in open retail environments that enable youth access. **Requiring storage in a locked cabinet is a proportionate and 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*