

Wendi Rook Society Botanicals LLC aka Kratom Divine  
House Committee on Economic Development  
HB 4013 Testimony

February 3, 2020

Good afternoon, Honorable Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Fahey and Wilson, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development.

My name is Wendi Rook, and I own and operate Society Botanicals LLC, aka Kratom Divine, a small, family run botanicals company based in Springfield. We sell kratom products online and in Oregon, California and Washington. We have observed some of the current practices in the industry that are a cause for concern, and we see the value of the Kratom Consumer Protection Act (KCPA) to help protect Oregonians and also the value of earning Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) Qualified Vendor status from the American Kratom Association (AKA) for demonstrating adherence to GMP as defined by the FDA.

As a company we have decided to take action to operate within the guidelines of the KCPA, and to pursue GMP Qualified Vendor status, and intend to be a GMP Qualified vendor within the next 180 days.

On behalf of our company, I'd like to thank you for considering reasonable regulations for the kratom industry that would prioritize the health and safety of Oregon's citizens.

Kratom is a plant from the coffee family, and it grows primarily in Southeast Asia. Kratom leaves have been used for centuries by native populations in those areas, usually chewed or brewed into a tea. A recent survey estimates that approximately 15 million people in the United States use kratom regularly, typically by making a tea with ground or powdered plant leaves. For the most part kratom consumers are professional adults who use this botanical as part of their daily routines to promote general wellness.

These consumers deserve access to safe and pure kratom products that enhance their lives, as well as protection from contaminated or improperly labelled products, or overblown and inaccurate claims.

I want to assure you that the health and safety of our customers is our primary concern, a concern that is shared by all legitimate, responsible kratom vendors.

We strongly believe, based on abundant historical and scientific evidence, that kratom is a safe botanical. But we also know that proper processes must be in place to ensure the safety and purity of these products for all consumers.

Since our founding in 2013, we protect have been committed to quality assurance and consumer safety. We have demonstrated this by personally visiting our supplier's warehouses

in Pontianak Indonesia to observe and ensure that their manufacturing processes and practices were adequate. We are proud to report they are in fact supplying us with only pure unadulterated bulk raw kratom which has always produced clean and safe lab results.

Over the past few years our company has grown tremendously and we are on our way to becoming an industry leader. We have invested thousands of dollars in physical plant upgrades, equipment and staff training, and we are working diligently at this time toward earning the GMP Qualified Vendor status from the AKA.

This means that among other things, we implement:

- Environmental controls and rigorous sanitation and handling procedures
- Comprehensive lab testing to guarantee purity and identify any possible contamination before products are introduced to market
- Responsible marketing that avoids any therapeutic or medical claims
- Proper labelling that accurately displays the identity of the product and its ingredients
- Labelling that includes age restrictions that prevent the sale of products to minors

We applaud the AKA's efforts to promote the GMP compliance, we are encouraged to see the kratom industry move toward adopting these standards on a large scale. The majority of kratom companies take their customers' safety seriously and are committed to responsible practices such as the ones I described.

Our company would like to see the few bad actors who endanger the public health put out of business as much as you would. We support reasonable regulation in our industry and welcome the standards and safeguards that the proposed KCPA would require of kratom vendors.

Thank you again for your time and consideration of kratom and its place in the lives of Oregonians. I urge you to vote in favor of HB 4013 during this short session so that kratom consumers in our state can be protected from contaminated and misbranded products, and so that responsible and compliant businesses such as ours can continue to provide our customers with safe pure kratom products.

I am happy to answer any questions about kratom, its consumers, or our company's efforts to become compliant with Good Manufacturing Practices.

Respectfully,

Wendi Rook

Owner/Operator Society Botanicals LLC aka Kratom Divine

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