

Submitter: Jenn Lauder

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Economic Recovery and Prosperity

Measure: HB4010

February 2, 2022

Good morning Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Cate and Kropf, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity,

For the record, my name is Jenn Lauder and I am the Director of Marketing and Advocacy at PDX Aromatics, a family-owned herbal products company in Portland. We appreciate the committee's consideration of House Bill 4010, and we thank Representatives Stark and Lively for their sponsorship of this important legislation.

This is the fourth session that I've appeared before the Oregon legislature to testify in favor of the Kratom Consumer Protection Act. I'm here again today because, as the largest kratom vendor in the state, our company believes that reasonable regulation as outlined in this bill is key to keeping kratom consumers safe and to building a compliant, responsible kratom industry.

As you may know, kratom is a tree indigenous to Southeast Asia that has been consumed for centuries by people native to that area, typically by chewing leaves or brewing leaves as tea. In the past decade, kratom has become popular here in the United States, where an estimated 15 million people consume it regularly, according to advocates.

In Oregon, kratom is sold in many forms but is currently not subject to any external quality controls. Instead, companies are left to self-regulate and customers are often left in the dark. Legitimate consumer packaged goods share the shelves with untested, potentially contaminated products. The quality assurance practices that have been codified by other consumable product industries, including and especially third party laboratory analysis, are optional in kratom right now.

While a number of companies like ours have adopted robust quality standards and have chosen to participate in programs that require adherence to Good Manufacturing Practices, many have not. Some will not, unless and until they are forced to. In the meantime, even one irresponsible vendor is too many. Their reluctance to consider consumer safety endangers public health and puts the entire industry at risk.

HB 4010 would require all kratom vendors who sell their products in our state to register with the Department of Revenue and to have available Certificates of

Analysis from an accredited third party lab for all of their kratom products. The Kratom Consumer Protection Act would also ensure that children cannot access kratom. Though the vast majority of kratom consumers are adults who use the botanical as part of their general wellness routines, we support this age restriction in an effort to prevent misuse by minors.

None of this is too much to ask of vendors; rather, these are basic standards that are currently lacking.

Since 2010, PDX Aromatics has prioritized quality assurance and consumer safety by embracing self-regulation. It's time for all kratom vendors to get on board, and we expect they might benefit from a regulatory nudge. We know there is a real need for consumer safeguards and uniform standards around this botanical product, and we believe this bill is a step in the right direction. I urge you to pass HB 4010 out of committee, and I look forward to continuing to work together to protect Oregon's kratom consumers. Thank you for your time and consideration.