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## **Kratom Industry to Congress: Protect Safe, Natural Botanical Products and Consumer Choice in Pending Drug Legislation**

*Millions relying on botanicals to manage their well-being are threatened by 11<sup>th</sup> hour addition of new language in House Bill directed at Synthetic Opioids*

**Washington, D.C.** — The Kratom Trade Association (KTA) urges Congress to reconcile the Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018 (OCRA, S. 2680) with the Substance Use-Disorder Prevention that Promotes Opioid Recovery and Treatment (SUPPORT, H.R. 6) while resisting demands to add language from the “Stop the Importation and Trafficking of Synthetic Analogues” (SITSA) Act H.R. 2851, which could restrict access to natural botanical products such as Kratom, which millions of American consumers benefit from as an alternative to manage their own health and well-being.

SITSA is aimed at banning chemical cousins or “analogues” of fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid responsible for thousands of overdose deaths that is increasingly appearing on the black market. It gives the Attorney General the power to list “a drug or substance” under a new schedule of controlled substances with “a chemical structure that is substantially similar to the chemical structure of a controlled substance in schedule I, II, III, IV, or V.”

Kratom is a natural botanical ingredient derived from the *Mitragyna speciosa* plant, part of the coffee family and has been used safely for decades in the United States. As currently written, SITSA could be used to ban Kratom, something the Drug Enforcement Administration tried unsuccessfully to do in 2016 when it inaccurately claimed it had “a high potential for abuse.” Kratom is not a dangerous opioid. It has helped millions of Americans improve their well-being.

Last week the Senate passed OCRA in a bipartisan vote of 99-1 to address America’s opioid crisis, but some in Congress appear to be holding this legislation hostage unless SITSA’s controversial provisions are added. This is despite the Senate never held a hearing or debate on these provisions. It is imperative that Congress pass this much needed opioid legislation without threatening natural botanicals and similar organics that offer countless benefits to millions of Americans.

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The **Kratom Trade Association** (KTA) is dedicated to the safe and responsible use of Kratom botanical products in the U.S. KTA is committed to regulatory compliance and will develop and promote use of best practices and quality standards for the industry. KTA will support Kratom research initiatives and conduct advocacy efforts to educate policy makers and the public about the benefits of Kratom, as well as dispelling common misconceptions. Visit [www.kratomtrade.org](http://www.kratomtrade.org) for more information.