

HMHS Cluster Transcript

January 21, 2026, 6:43PM

● **Kieu-Anh King** started transcription

R1 **Room 140** 0:04

Testing, testing, testing.
Testing. Testing.

RY **Ray Young (CEO)** 1:21

Go ahead, Kieran. You want to test?

R1 **Room 140** 1:23

Hey, Ray, I can hear you.

RY **Ray Young (CEO)** 1:25

OK, I can hear you too. Yep.

R1 **Room 140** 1:25

Hear me.
OK, great. And I turned on transcription and captions, so hopefully that'll help folks listening in.

RY **Ray Young (CEO)** 1:29

Sounds good.
OK.

R1 **Room 140** 1:37

OK.
Thanks, ray.

RY **Ray Young (CEO)** 1:38

Yep.

GB **Gold Leaf Botanicals** 43:00

Hi if you.

This person is available.

FR **Frank Reyes** 46:22

Now seeing that order so fast.

BN **Beth Nishida** 46:29

And I can have patients in a place called.

About 1700 miles from home surveillance.

+13***39** 47:13

Thank you.

R1 **Room 140** 47:29

Good morning, everyone.

I'll call the meeting to order now.

Please note that you will need to officially and meet yourself or by dialing *6 if you're calling in as a reminder public comment.

Will start with introductions, offices and then.

How in 4th district?

I think I got a video.

Where I can ask for Toy Gomez, second District, Fox Third District, Third District.

4th district.

Well, do we have any representatives from the first district on the call?

From the 2nd district.

Check.

That's right.

We want to county representatives.

Salvato Sanchez DHS government awards.

I'll show up vowski with public health.

Robin Parks, medical director at medical.

 +19*****82 49:00
Yeah.

 **Room 140** 49:04

Luis Gonzalez, a resident of LA County consumer.
Jillian TD LA County Public Works Harry Wong, CEO of capital programs.
Crystal kibbe DMH.
Gonzales, DPH, government affairs.

 +19*****82 49:21
Go.

 **Room 140** 49:23

Hanna Otero, LA County resident and advocate consumer.

 +19*****62 49:27
All right.

 **Room 140** 49:29

Justin Wolf, CEO of New Brew, which is kratom vendor. And.
Ryan Hurley with the Department of Public Health.
Yes, you Beck with seven Hope Alliance, Abdullah memoon authentic freedom.
I'm also a resident of California Angeles.
Any county representative the call.

 **Martin, Daniel W.** 49:56

Yeah, you have Captain Daniel Martin and Lieutenant Vanessa Chao from CRDF.

 **Garcia, Roel D.** 50:02
Commander Rowell Garcia.

 **Room 140** 50:10
County representative.

GS **Greg Sagherian** 50:10

You got Greg Segura in public works.

AK **Ariga Khachekian** 50:13

Erica Hachicken public works.

R1 **Room 140** 50:13

Let's.

AK **Ariga Khachekian** 50:14

Works.

FR **Frank Reyes** 50:18

Cracker AFC or CAP programs?

GH **Gary Hirschtick** 50:19

Skip.

R1 **Room 140** 50:19

Red.

BL **Brian Lozada** 50:25

Brian Lozada, CEO of capital programs.

+ **13*****87** 50:30

Yes.

GH **Gary Hirschtick** 50:30

Gary Herstick, Public Health division of environmental health.

RR **Robert Ragland** 50:39

Robert Ragland, Public health.

AK **Azar Kattan** 50:43

Hazar Katan, public health Health Protection Bureau.

cc **Charlene Contreras** 50:49

Charlene Catarras public health.

R1 **Room 140** 50:58

Any representatives on the call?

yw **Yates, Clint W.** 51:02

Yes, this is director Clint Yates with LA County Sheriff's facility services.

I'm here with CRDF, captain.

DR **Dr. Michele Ross** 51:11

Hi, I'm doctor Michelle Ross.

I'm an addiction scientist in court, qualified kratom expert.

JL **Jessica L** 51:18

Hi, I'm Jessica lawless. I'm a.

I'm a 7 O user.

vu **Venus Usher** 51:28

Hi, my name is Ben.

cy **Chiu, Kelly Y.** 51:28

Kelly chiefs.

+17***69** 51:28

Alright.

vu **Venus Usher** 51:29

Oh, I'm sorry. Go on. Sorry.

+17***69** 51:32

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Hi, I'm Michael fassano.

I'm a creative leaf tea consumer.

CY Chiu, Kelly Y. 51:38

Kelly chieve.

Sheriff's facilities planning.

+19***82** 51:42

None.

R1 Room 140 51:45

Other representatives from the county Department, visible brand.

HB Haley Broder 51:46

Haley broder.

+13***87** 51:48

Let me.

R1 Room 140 51:57

We're only doing introductions of Tommy representatives.

Do we have any others on the call minutes?

+13***87** 52:05

Now turn left onto eastbound highway.

TH Talin Halabi 52:05

Colin.

Hobby county.

R1 Room 140 52:12

OK.

Well, go ahead and get started then.

With today's meeting, the agenda note that we have two motions and three presentation items.

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We will switch the order of the motions.

With item 2B.

4 preventing deaths related to COVID-19 and seven in each of two. Or yeah, thank you so much, colleagues.

I'm here to preface on a motion that our office.

Doing called preventing death related to kratom and seven.

Hydroxy imagining 7OH in Los Angeles to you, so last year we had six people drive fatal overdoses related to this compound found in creative known as 70.

We also just learned that another individual died from it this year. As a preamble shares. We have a growing availability of these products at gas stations, smoke shops and other online retail locations, and the risks associated with them are are rising.

DPH has issued warning letters to.

Retailers.

Share and they conducted enforcement actions to remove these products from stores given the potential dangers of the products, it's an issue that we know that the county would rather get in front of instead of waiting.

And so the directive before you is asking for a report back from our recommendations from our county subject matter experts, DPH, SAPSI and the medical examiner, aware that there are other jurisdictions that have explored and have taken steps such as.

Adopting ordinances around the product and just to give some background and information about this issue, I haven't asked that. The medical examiner's office. So we have doctor parks and we have DP staff, C Doctor Hurley, if they could join us up on the front, give some back.

And make sure that they have done around this around this product.

Thank you.

US air.

I'm just gonna go ahead and give some background information and then I'll go ahead and hand it over to Doctor Hurley from Department of Public Health.

So what is kratom?

Kratom is a tree native to Southeast Asia.

Its leaves can be crushed and smoked.

It can be brewed as a tea food and placed in a gel.

Capsules is a Duke consumption of its leaves produces stimulant effects at low doses, with users reporting increased alertness.

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Energy talkativeness at higher doses it produces sedative effects similar to opioids, and it can also induce dependence.

The main psychoactive ingredients of its leaves are metrogeny and to a much lesser extent less than 0.1%.

7 hydroxy metrogeny, which I'll actually come back to. Kratom is ingested postmortem toxicology will reveal.

Metrogy it may reveal 7 hydroxy metrogenine albeit.

At a very, very low level.

Adam, as mentioned is not FDA approved for any medical use and is not federally scheduled with several states. As was mentioned, cities and counties have imposed regulations or prohibited against possession and use of kratom. Purposes of this discussion, when I mentioned kratom, I'm speaking directly about Metrogeny. Oh.

What is 7 hydroxy metrogeny often referred to as 7?

07 hydroxy.

Seven HMG, or even legal morphine. It is a metabolite of metrogeny and concentrated form can be marked as a way of relaxation.

Mood enhancement reduced anxiety.

To be clear, 70 is not the same as kratom.

The no is only present at trace levels.

Like I said, less than 0.171 percent or even non detectable.

Kratom leaf?

Informed during the drying process as part of harvesting the plant and it is also formed in the human body during metabolism of metabolic product. It's only found in very low levels.

Evidence O is 10 to 40 times more potent than metrogeny, with a much shorter half life. Users report more rapid effects when taking 70 over kratom.

Seven O can be more potent than morphine by about 10 times.

It's been in seven. Oh.

Both act on the mu opioid receptors, which account for its opioid like effects.

Being pain relief and.

But also similar to opioids, it may produce sedation and respiratory depression.

Even O is further metabolized into metrogenine pseudo indoxylo referred to as NP in the body, which is nearly as potent as fentanyl.

It's a traded products involving both 70 and NP are for sale to the public.

They're considered semi synthetic given they are manufactured through conversion

of metrogeny.

Concentrated products are available for sale online in great stores in smoke shops.

Gas station and undoubtedly other stores, it can be sold in a tablet or pill form.

Gummies or edibles, mixes or shots, and even vapes.

In early summer 2025, Department of Medical Examiner started identifying cases with really high 70 and very low metrogeny, which was opposite the usual trend we see for kratom use.

Levels of seven O in these cases were 50 to 200 times greater than the metrogeny levels, indicating a concentrated and adulterated product had been ingested and not the natural form of kratom. The first death occurred in April 2025 and was certified in September 2020.

Five, without any other competing causes of death around that time is when we also certified five other deaths related to 70.

To date, there have been.

Been seven confirmed and certified deaths directly attributed to seven hydroxy metrogeny. Of these seven cases, demographics include at least one death from every supervisorial district.

No person's experiencing homelessness.

White or Caucasians and one Hispanic and Latino.

Mixed male and one female.

All of whom identified as cisgender.

Ages range from 19 to 39.

Six of the seven decedents reported anxiety indoor depression. Of the seven cases sworn on toxicology revealed not only the seven hydroxy metrogeny metrogenine, but also alcohol and or prescription medications for anxiety.

They did not include any active illicit substances such as fentanyl or methamphetamine.

Packaging in these cases can be very misleading, with for example 3 tablets in one package and the packaging noting 12 servings, indicating each tablet should be cut into quarters. At this point, I'll turn it over to Doctor Brian Hurley from Department of Public Health, Substance abuse prevention, and.

Control Bureau.

Doctor parks well, for those I haven't met yet. I'm Brian Hurley.

I'm an addiction psychiatrist.

I'm the medical director of the Bureau of Substance Abuse.

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Prevention of control and I'm joined here by my environmental Health colleagues online.

Department of Public Health heard from the medical examiner in September, just as was described about the overdose fatalities attributed to 7 hydroxy metrogenane. The time we put out a press release and a health alert to the community, the health alert included information around identifying and recognizing opioid overdose. Roxie, Michigan isn't opioid.

It activates opioid receptors and can respond to naloxone, which is our standard guidance on what to do in an opioid.

However, we put out an additional press release when we learned about the additional decedents identified from the medical.

Then in November, we put out a notice to retailers to no longer sell hydroxychloro. Quine that goes out to visit food retailers.

Has begun what's called red tagging, that is, identifying freedom and a 70 products which the FDA has listed are not.

A FDA approved food additives.

And again, FDA guidance is these are not suitable for consumption to ask retailers to pull them off the shelves.

Rationale behind that is we are seeing an hydroxy metrogeny related overdoses.

Isn't a universal.

Labeling process that can be used to distinguish products from plant products.

So when we see kratom product.

Our determination, as it poses a risk to the Community.

Insert should be pulled off the shelves, so our.

Colleagues have at this point, since we began our facility inspections inspected and my colleagues will correct me if I have any details wrong.

Something like 2000 sites and have identified retailers that are selling kratom products and are again rinting those products and having them pulled from sale for the public. We also have launched a creative webpage.

It's on the Sam's website to provide information to the community about what creative is.

Create them in seven hydroxy trginine treat again to make sure people are aware of the overdose risks and that's the current state of where we are with respect to, but the health department is put forward responsive to learning around 7 hydroxy or 7OH overdose.

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Thank you so much.

And so, you know, the purpose of this motion is not to criminalize, but it is to ensure consumer safety and health.

So this motion has one directive which is that the board supervisors direct the Department of Public Health in collaboration with Department of Medical Examiner in consultation with County Council to provide a written report back in 30 days for recommendations how the county should address and prevent deaths and.

Harm related to chronic 7.

Oh, including but not limited to creating an ordinance identifying funds and staffing needs, and outreach into the public to help inform the.

Recommendations to be made so on that note I will see if my colleagues have any questions for Doctor Erz, Park and Hurley on this issue.

Victoria. Second, I know it's going to be in the report back in terms of additional funding or staffing needs, but at this current time, what do you think on the SAP CR give that you did not come prepared with the staffing analysis?

There were almost depending on the scope of the report and what we're recommending back. If there's additional enforcement actions actually are mental, health team may need some additional staffing support about to take that back and get back to.

Yeah, but I I didn't.

I didn't come prepared with an estimate right now.

No, you're fine.

Gonna real quick turn over to Joshua, any additional thoughts?

No, but we if we have additional thoughts at this point, we can get back to you.

Thank you very much.

Question was triggered by when you said there was 2000 site inspections.

So just curious, we do regular.

Review of food and commercial retailers anyway, right.

So it doesn't necessarily that there's additional sites that we're covering, but I think I wanna make sure that you know the additional work that comes with identifying additional range of products at sites does come with additional work.

So I would wanna make sure that.

As part of our report back, that was considered in our recommendation.

Right now, kratom is 70 are marketed, so there's a lot of marketing.

There's folks that report a variety of reported uses for Craven, 70.

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Neither are FD approved to treat any medical conditions, so just to be clear, although there's a lot of marketing that talks about these as medications, they're not actually approved medications that are prescribable to pharmacies in the traditional way that we prescribe medications to treat.

Medical conditions.

But there are a whole number of claims about kratom in 708 conditions.

I just don't want to misstate.

I don't want to misstate that.

That has gone through the update review process.

One of the things that we have put out is we have heard from a number of Community advocates talking about the use of N or 70 products to self treat withdrawal to treat pain syndromes, and we do have FDA approved medications for opiate use disorder that can.

Treat opioid withdrawal that depending on the.

Which medication is chosen can have analgesic properties and so one of the things that we've made sure to put out to our treatment network is what treatment options are available for opioid use disorder.

And make sure that the current guidance on the treatment of pain is available in the Community.

Morning everyone.

My name is Abdullah.

I'm actually the owner of authentic freedom, a campaign that I started 12 years ago.

I'm based in Los Angeles.

My company mainly focuses on natural kratom, and kratom has been used for centuries on a new thing.

I would like to oppose the idea to add this kratom, add the 708. I would like for you guys to take a look at overall picture where a natural kratom has helped millions of people.

All across the country.

Recently on FDA last year, July 29th 2025, actually FDA came out and they stated that kratom actually their their primary focus is not kratom that has traceable amount of synthetic oh on it. So 70 on it, they are focusing on the the synthetic version.

Of the 70, which is very, very dangerous and as a creative vendor for 12 years.

I never I heard about it a few years ago.

There are a lot of people be calling me, asking me to carry the product. It's very

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profitable.

Apparently I I decided not to do it.

I refuse to carry it.

Anything that's like harmful for people, and in my 12 years in business, I have spoken to thousands and thousands of customers.

I have.

I've done calls with the customers.

People literally cry on the phone how that kratom plant has changed their lives.

It's not like it.

You know, the 708 is started the three years ago. Ever since that whole 708 thing started, I have customer walks by shop and they're asking me, hey guys, do you guys carry some knowledge? They have no idea what some knowledge. They're just taking it.

They're finishing it.

They're just coming back for more.

It's a dangerous drug out there, and if they're the FDA commissioner said last year that kratom is like 10:15 to 30 times stronger than morphine, so.

Aye, a comment in the room first.

OK.

Good morning. Chair Garcia and members of this committee. My name is Jackie Subeck.

I am the executive director for Seven Hope Alliance, a non profit dedicated to public education, advocacy and science on 70 and kratom to naturally occurring alkaloids in the kratom plant.

I'm speaking here today in support of child safety and responsible regulations.

And in opposition of any criminalization of these products.

Kratom and seven oh are not separate issues.

They are the same plant, the same community, and are used by the same people.

Responsible adults, many of whom rely on these products to simply get through their day, including 75% of these consumers who use it specifically for chronic pain.

The average kratom consumer is a 43 year old man trying to maintain a quality of life, go to work and take care of his family.

Even more troubling is that 17% of surveyed, 70 consumers said that if these products were banned, they would consider suicide.

These substances are being used as harm reduction tools, often as alternatives to far

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more dangerous opioids that we already know are fueling the opioid overdose crisis last year.

County health declared that six deaths were linked to 70. But when the toxicology reports were reviewed, all six of them reveal Poly substance use, including benzodiazepines.

Cocaine, and one that was deemed acute alcohol intoxication and nationally there has not been one single death attributed to 70 alone. If nearly 300,000 Angelinos are using these products every day to have a better quality of life, why is public health picking winners and Los?

Without doing one single study session, perhaps it makes sense to slow down.

Look at the science and talk to consumers and work towards a regulatory package. There is no actual crisis.

Alternatively, the county could just wait for the state. Last week in Sacramento, a bill was heard on 70 every single committee member was crystal clear that kratom and seven oh needed to be studied and that regulation, not prohibition, was the clear pathway.

I am Justin Wolf, founder of Bevard brand called New Brew based here in Los Angeles.

Actually I guess I wanna use my time to just point to something that's very simple. There's already a solution to this underway in the legislature in California. It's the bill AB and 88.

The common sense regulatory framework, very similar to the framework that's gone into law in 19 other states.

Now, most recently in New York, the governor signed it into law just last month.

There's a lot of work that went into this, right?

This is not something that was just drawn up at the last.

Second, you know, heavy debate has gone into this.

Both sides have been considered and the result is a very balanced sort of approach where we're ensuring that these kind of products are restricted to just 21 and up adults.

There are lab testing requirements.

Labeling requirements.

It helps clean up the industry. Bill also does include a cap on 70 content that can be included in the CRITER.

Ia.

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By Joe Biden's former national drug policy director.

Just about every Police Department up and down the state of California.

You know, many medical and legal expensive experts around the country as well.

So that has already passed unanimously through California Assembly.

It's just waiting to be seen by the Senate, so I really, you know, I think it's great if LA County adopts a similar framework at the local level, sure.

Ultimately, this has already been weighed in on it's already being worked and.

You know, I think the actions of the the Health department are, you know, they're well-intentioned, right?

Because there is a public health emergency, but unfortunately they've conflated these two different substances and they are very different substances.

I'm sorry. They just are.

They're chemically different, literally pharmacologically different.

They have different risk profiles, abuse profiles and unfortunately a lot of money and energy has gone into perpetuating this confusion.

Need to be separate things.

OK.

Good morning.

My name is Luis Gonzalez.

I am a lot state lot state board license Barber residing in Los Angeles County for the past eight years.

I'm asking why are these deaths appearing only recently when the products have been on the market for years?

IN2023I developed severe sciatic nerve pain due to the physical demands of my profession. For example, standing.

Eight to 10 hours a day, seven days a week.

During flare ups, my pain reached 10 out of 10 level pain on the pain scale and often prevented me from.

Doing minimum physical activity and going to work.



David Woolf 1:13:22

You know what I'm saying?



Room 140 1:13:28

I tried all physical therapy recommended methods to help with this issue.

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Olga.

Acupuncture.

We call it the massage.

The massage you have physical therapy.

And no relief, no relief.

Maybe only a minimum temporary relief from those methods.

Then I discovered 70 and I well, first I discovered kratom, and then the kratom was good. I'd say pretty large doses.

For me to see any real benefits.

'Cause it was like getting me, you know, like it was hard to go to the restroom when taking large amounts of kratom.

I started using 70 with kratom here and there and allowed me to manage my pain and being employed from a county.

Like.

Hi I'm gonna read my statement here about 25 years ago. I suffered a tragic accident that left me.

Vilitating pain. I was giving opioids. My doctors had led me to become dependent through the out the next few years I had three massive back surgeries and dozens of other treatments to address my injuries.

But the but the main treatment was opioids.

A lot of them.

I became both an addict and a chronic pain patient, taking up to 60 pills a day to get by.

I developed tolerance and then they would increase my dosage and type of narcotic. I was a walking zombie on long term disability. My constant desire to get clean off these meds led me to be in and out of rehab facilities.

Maybe many hospitals stays where I would be chemically detoxed by doctors and nurses.

The times I would be free of my addiction, I would be confronted with the chronic pain of my injuries.

I was AI was a prisoner to opioids, unable to work, exercise or have healthy relationships with friends and family until I discovered kratom. Kratom saved my life. Life. It allowed me to be able to cope with my chronic pain as well as allow to have a normal quality of life off of opioids.

I now work full time work out six times a week and feel liberated from years of

constant withdrawals and addiction.

It allowed me to again be able to have good relationships with friends and family with eight little grams of a green natural powder a day. I feel great, all while never needing to increase my dose.

It keeps me pain free and helps my depression and anxiety, all while never needing to take the poison that stole many years.

My life. So I ask you to please keep natural kratom leaf legal and accessible. I am in favor of banning 70 H which is not kratom leaf.

It is a concentrated form 100 times of strength and very dangerous as you consider regular and kratom like more than a dozen other states with the Kratom Consumer Act, which would ensure kratom products are not adultered limit sales to individuals, at least 18 or 21 years old.

And require proper labeling.

Kratom has saved so many lives and it gives people a natural way to cope with their chronic pain.

Into depression.

It's it took this plant if you took this plant away from me, my whole world would collapse.

 +19*****82 1:16:54

Let me scroll.

 R1 Room 140 1:16:54

Continue.

 +19*****82 1:16:56

There's all.

This decision directly.

In the publisher.

 R1 Room 140 1:17:03

For people who are online on the call, if you'd like to speak in public comment, please raise your hand in the app and your name will be called in order for everybody else online, please keep your line muted.

Thank you.

Do you want me to call David Wolf? 2 minutes.

DW **David Woolf** 1:17:24

Hi, how are you?

I'm not David. David's my husband, but we're on his phone.

R1 **Room 140** 1:17:29

OK.

DW **David Woolf** 1:17:31

My name is Melody Wolf and I was the one that spoke at the HHS and FDA press conference.

R1 **Room 140** 1:17:34

What?

DW **David Woolf** 1:17:37

They asked me and to speak and they welcomed me to their platform.

R1 **Room 140** 1:17:38

OK.

DW **David Woolf** 1:17:41

The FDA commissioner did ask me to talk about the benefits of kratom and then to distinguish it from 7:08.

Which definitely needs to be off the shelves.

I'm a 12 year daily consumer.

I used to be bad ridden.

I was bedridden for about eight years.

And I found crodom.

Thank goodness. And ever since then I've been pretty active.

I pain used to be at an 8 to A10 daily and now it's A2 to A4.

And the Commissioner and HHS secretary, they were very clear that they are not going after the plain leaf products. They want to get the 70 H off the shelves.

And so do I.

Thank you so much.

R1 Room 140 1:18:33

On shinhulzer.

JS John Shinholser 1:18:39

Yeah, I'm John Shenholt, Sir.

The advocacy director for American Veterans for Kratom safe.

R1 Room 140 1:18:41

Thank you.

JS John Shinholser 1:18:45

I'm also been in the addiction recovery space for over 43 years.

I've been sober myself over 43 years. Over the last 15 years, I've seen thousands and upon thousands of addicts and Alcoholics and prescription addicts, pivot from these dangerous substances.

To you know, they pivot from A1 pill kill.

To a kratom product that would properly package third party tested everything you consuming is right on the label.

They use FDA regulatory guidelines for packaging and the miracle of this plant is incredible.

I've never seen a natural leaf kratom that I've met 3 out of 1000 taking natural leaf.

That that the three of them, they, they stopped taking it after a while.

They they went to treatment.

Now kratom.

A lot of people come to my life.

They pivot from these one pill kills.

They get in the kratom, we have relationships and it's a segue into clinical services should they need, you know, a higher level of services and and medication assisted therapies. You know the the Congress made it a rule in 1994 to protect consumers.

So we could have.

Choice for products out there, you know.

Please don't have a knee jerk reaction.

To the to the demonization of the natural kratom leaf plant.

You know, so so many people going to be hurt by this.

I expect thousands of people will actually die if if we if we ban kratom, it just it doesn't make sense, you know, and and of all the addictions, you can have natural leaf kratom that that's the the best one to deal with.

Probably the easiest 1 to get people away from it off of it. So you know I just I want to support just common sense, kratom regulation, natural kratom plants. Sounds like you got a problem with synthetics and these other products. Kratom is not the problem. Kratom is a.

To.

R1 Room 140 1:20:52

Dan Gibbs.

DG Dan Gibbs 1:20:56

Yes. Can you hear me?

Can you hear me?

You can hear me.

R1 Room 140 1:21:05

Yeah.

DG Dan Gibbs 1:21:07

OK.

So good afternoon.

I'm speaking in support of the SD4 preventing deaths related to kratom and 7:08.

I respectfully urge that the recommendations from this motion include a total ban on kratom and all kratom derived products, including the so-called pure leaf.

I'm here because my son Austin died at 25 years old after using a kratom product he believed was safe because it was marked as natural leaf.

His official autopsy determined that my traumaticity was a cause of death.

There were no illicit drugs, no prescription opioids involved.

That loss is permanent and that is why I'm here.

You will hear advocates argue that purely kratom is safe and that only synthetic or

enhanced 708 products should be restricted.

But those same advocates often say kratom eliminated their need for morphine, oxy or even heroin, and that it saved their lives by treating severe chronic pain. They don't realize it, but that argument undermines their own position, a substance powerful enough to replace opioids is, by definition, opioid.

Active in pharmacically potent, you cannot credibly argue that it is both life saving opioid substitute and a harmless supplement.

When federal regulators such as the DEA and the FDA evaluate whether a substance should be restricted, they consistently look at three things, how it works in the body, its potential for abuse and dependence, and its impact on public health, including death.

R1 Room 140 1:22:17

OK.

DG Dan Gibbs 1:22:31

By those same criteria, kratom meets the threshold, even in leaf form. Importantly, this conclusion is not isolated. In January, the Ohio Board of Pharmacy determined that naturally occurring my trajanine and kratom presents an unacceptable risk to public health and move to prohibit kratom products statewide. Explicitly rejecting the idea that purely can be carved out. SD4 also knows that Los Angeles County public health worn retailers to stop selling these products and initiate enforcement, and that the safest public health guideline is to avoid kratom and kratom related products altogether. I respect.

R1 Room 140 1:23:07

Thank you.

DG Dan Gibbs 1:23:07

I respectfully ask that SD4 report back included countywide ordinance banning Cray.

R1 Room 140 1:23:13

Key chamber here.

WC **Wendy Chamberlain** 1:23:16

Hi, can you hear me?

R1 **Room 140** 1:23:18

Yes, we can.

WC **Wendy Chamberlain** 1:23:19

OK.

Hi, my name is Wendy Chamberlain and I'm here today as a mother who lost her only child because the truth about kratom was never made clear.

My son Joseph was a business owner and the father of three amazing boys. He was smart and funny and lived every day for his family.

He was my best friend in my life, like so many other parents, I believed Kratom was safe, natural supplement and was sold openly with no meaningful warnings.

It places in places like gas stations and vape shops.

Joseph died from a traumatic toxicity only.

No other substances.

The primary alkaloid in kratom.

The product involved was plain leaf powder marketed as a so-called GMP product.

Seeing something I believed was harmless listed as the cause of my child's death is something no parent should ever have to endure.

This is not an isolated tragedy. In 2024, two percent of unintentional overdose deaths tested positive for metrogenene the active drug in kratom.

That percentage represents approximately 3930 lives lost.

Behind every number is a family forever changed.

Kratom acts as the same receptors as opioids.

It can cause dependent suppressed breathing and in some cases it can kill, especially when people are never told the real risk communities across the country have tried measures, age limits, warning, LED labels and so-called consumer protection laws.

They have failed.

States like Utah learned that regulations does not stop harm or products or is unpredictable.

Unregulated and aggressively marketed as safe six months after my son died, I founded criteria awareness.

R1 Room 140 1:24:45

I.

WC Wendy Chamberlain 1:24:51

What began a small support group is now grown into a national nonprofit providing education, outreach and support to families affected by kratom harm through Joseph Death. I have connected with thousands of people who share this loss.

We are not funded by, nor do we work for trial attorneys.

We are parents, families and advocates trying to prevent another call like the one today. You have the power to protect your community before another life is lost.

R1 Room 140 1:25:10

Please.

WC Wendy Chamberlain 1:25:19

Thank you for listening and thank you for choosing life and safety.

R1 Room 140 1:25:23

Thank you, Wendy. Tony rodini.

Unmute yourself.

TR Tony Rodini 1:25:36

Hey, hey. Hi. Can you hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:25:38

Yes, thank you.

TR Tony Rodini 1:25:40

OK, sorry, I'm not much of A public speaker, but I'm gonna just do my best to.

To read testimonial that I've written.

I am a resident in LA County.

I've been using kratome for almost 10 years and I'm a strong advocate for the plant.

I have severe obsessive compulsive disorder as well as anxiety and attic disorder.

Kratom significantly helps reduce my anxiety.

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Which in turn helps me manage the ticks, ruminations and other difficult symptoms caused by my conditions.

Science will support that the natural plant and its unadulterated state poses no threat to the public health and safety.

I believe that the 70 products are the problem and should be recognized as so.

You know, I I guess I'll just point out.

I just want to echo a few things that I've written down that I've noticed within this call that other people have mentioned. And you know, why have deaths only been noted as of a few years ago?

Because, you know, Kratom has been on the shelves for over a decade, so there's obviously some underlying new problem. I think regulation is OK.

Is good, not prohibition and.

And I guess lastly, I I would like to say that I think thousands and thousands of people find benefit from the natural plant and help them experience a healthy. A healthy.

Living well, a healthy, you know, life.

R1 Room 140 1:27:32

Thank you.

Thank you, Lou.

MK Matthew Lowe_Global Kratom 1:27:40

Yeah, I'm here. Can you hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:27:42

Yes.

MK Matthew Lowe_Global Kratom 1:27:45

Good afternoon, chair and members of the cluster.

My name is Matthew Lowe and I'm the executive director of the Global Creighton Coalition.

We share your goal of wanting to prevent deaths and harm that come from dangerous, from access to dangerous synthetic products like concentrated 70.

However, we implore you to make a key distinction between natural kratom leaf, a centuries old botanical, and.

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These novel opioids.

That masquerade as dietary supplements and masquerade as natural.

I want to distinguish between the two very quickly.

Natural creatively for the botanicals from Southeast Asia with centuries of safe traditional use, it's been consumed in the US for more than 50 years and is currently safely consumed by 23 million Americans.

Neither has funded over \$100 million in natural kratom research over the past decade, finding research at leading universities.

Natural creativity has 18 human clinical trials that have been done to date, all showing its safety.

Natural creativity is a complex botanical made-up of 50 different alkaloids which make up 2% of the weight of the leaf material.

It contains 50% fibre and 25% antioxidants.

Natural creatine leaf only contains only trace amounts of 70.

Either, by contrast, these novels, synthetics, 708 products.

Our novel lab created opioids that have synthetically enhanced levels of isolated 708 that concentrate the potency to more than 100 times, that of which is found in natural creatine leaf.

The result is a concentrated synthetic product that is 13 times more potent than morphine.

These products have no history of safe use, no clinical or preclinical work to show their safety and are devoid of the 50 natural alkaloids, the fiber and the antioxidants that make up natural creatine.

R1

Room 140 1:29:43

Thank you.

MK

Matthew Lowe_Global Kratom 1:29:45

Federal leaders drew this line last year when the HHSFDA and DA announced a coordinated, coordinated federal effort to schedule concentrated synthetic 70 FDA Medicare that their recommendation only applied applies to products containing concentrated, unnatural levels of 70 H and they are.

Not focused on natural kratom leaf.

We implore you to follow the lead of the state with Ade 1088.

For all this distinction.

Regulate natural creatin leaf.

Ensure it's only accessible to adults and prohibit concentrated synthetic 70. Thank you for your time.

R1 Room 140 1:30:24

Jessica L.

JL Jessica L 1:30:30

Hi are you able to hear me OK?

R1 Room 140 1:30:32

Yes.

JL Jessica L 1:30:36

OK.

Great. So my name is Jessica Lawless, and I appreciate this opportunity to speak today and my heart goes out to everyone who has lost a loved one to drug overdoses, alcoholism or suicide.

My life has also been full of these traumatic deaths.

What I want to talk about today is the fact that I'm a Californian and A7 O consumer. I use both 70 and kratom for chronic pain associated with Crohn's disease.

I strongly oppose the banning of criminalization of 70 or kratom.

This botanical is a critical part of my healthcare regimen.

It supports my prescription medications and makes it possible for me to fully participate in work and family responsibilities.

Before I was using 70, I only had partial physical mobility due to nerve pain caused by stress and inflammation.

Today, not only am I able to walk without a cane, I'm also able to exercise, socialize with friends, and travel all things that give me an improved quality of life.

R1 Room 140 1:31:27

No.

JL Jessica L 1:31:38

When you look further into the kratom plant and the health benefits from the

alkaloids in this plant, you'll learn as I have that this is an important product. California consumers should have available.

As a choice in individual Wellness plans, I urge you to recommend reasonable regulation, not prohibition or criminalization. We have a long history that shows Prohibition doesn't work, and it will result in many of us seeking harder drugs or even choosing suicide if we don't have this tool for.

Harm reduction and pain relief.

Thank you very much for your time.

R1 Room 140 1:32:13

Baker.

BB Brody Baker 1:32:15

Good afternoon.

My name is Brodie Baker and I'm a resident of Los Angeles County. I am submitting this testimony to clarify the important distinction between natural kratom leaf products and highly concentrated or synthetic compounds such as 70 natural kratom. When responsibly produced and used by adults is not the same as 70 isolates or chemically enhanced products. Conflating these substance lead.

To misleading conclusions and unnecessary harm to consumers who rely on natural kratom as a safer, regulated alternative.

I would also like to be clear that I've never had a dependency on alcohol.

R1 Room 140 1:32:45

No.

BB Brody Baker 1:32:48

However, even without dependency, alcohol consumption still carried physical, mental and emotional consequences for me.

Arms that are widely recognized and well documented in California alone. On average annually 19,000 deaths per year are attributed to excessive alcohol use, including chronic acute causes such as liver disease and injuries.

Seeking a healthier adult alternative for social settings, I discovered natural kratom beverages.

After transitioning away from alcohol and choosing natural kratom instead, I

experienced a dramatic improvement in my overall well-being.

My physical health improved.

My mental clarity increased and my emotional stability strengthened.

I was able to remain socially engaged with all the negative consequences I previously experienced from alcohol. The shift had a positive effect beyond just me, my wife, friends and family have likewise benefited from having a social beverage option that does not involve alcohol.

Social gatherings became more inclusive, supportive and health conscious without the pressures or harms commonly associated with drinking.

Decision was not about intoxication or substitution for dependency. It was about harm reduction and making a responsible, informed adult choice.

I support reasonable regulation of natural kratom products, including age restrictions, quality control standards, labeling requirements and bands on synthetic or dangerously concentrated derivatives of such a 70. These measures protect consumers while preserving access for adults who benefit from natural kratom as a safer alternative to alcohol and.

R1 Room 140 1:34:08

Repeat.

BB Brody Baker 1:34:14

Other high risk substances.

Natural kratom should be regulated responsibly, not prohibited or misclassified.

So adults can thank you for your time.

R1 Room 140 1:34:23

Misty brown.

See.

MB Misty Brown 1:34:33

My name is Misty Brown and I am a Colorado kratom advocate and activist.

I want to say that there is a critical scientific difference between whole leaf kratom and the products being sold today as 708 whole leaf kratom is simply the dried leaf of metrics.

Its primary outlord is metragine. When someone consumes kratom, the human body

naturally converts only a small amount, typically well under 1% into 708 through normal liver.

Liver metabolism. This process is slow and self limiting.

By contrast, the 70 products now appearing on the market contain laboratory isolated or chemically converted 7 hydroxy metragonine and amounts far beyond what the human body could ever produce from kratom leaf. At those levels, 70 behaves much more like a conventional opioid and carries a much.

Higher risk when these products, when these high potency 70 products are lumped with natural kratom, it leads to a misleading assessments and poor public policy.

Regulating or restricting 708 does not require banning whole leaf kratom, and that distinction matters because kratom saved my life from 2008 to 2019, I lived trapped in FDA approved pain pills, benzals and muscle relaxers prescribed for my degenerative disc disease over 11 years.

R1 Room 140 1:35:52

Good.

Right.

MB Misty Brown 1:35:55

Chronic pain management turned into a full blown addiction.

What began as a dependency slowly became a cycle of misuse, desperation and shame.

In April of 2019, I was dismissed from Pain management after failing a required pill count.

I was short on my medication and couldn't find what I needed. Cut off from prescriptions. I turned to the streets and in that desperation I slipped into cocaine use while trying to find another doctor. By June of 2019, I was in withdrawal in that rock bottom when.

I watched a documentary called a Leaf of Faith.

That moment changed everything.

The next day, I walked into a smoke shop, showed my ID, bought whole leaf.

Kratom, not synthetic 70.

R1 Room 140 1:36:36

Thank you.

MB **Misty Brown** 1:36:37

Kratom quiet said the relentless cravings, the voice that kept saying.
One more pill, one more snort and one more escape.

R1 **Room 140** 1:36:40

Thank you, miss Taylor.
We need to move on.

MB **Misty Brown** 1:36:44

Is it over?

R1 **Room 140** 1:36:46

Yes, thank you.

MB **Misty Brown** 1:36:47

OK.

R1 **Room 140** 1:36:51

We still have a number of speakers who have their hands raised and due to the limitations of time for this meeting, we're going to need to reduce our public comment to one minute each for your understanding.
Susan, go ahead.
Effort.

SE **susan eppard** 1:37:07

Hello, my name is.

SC **Susan A Cave** 1:37:07

Yes, I'm sorry. There are two Susans. Go ahead, Susan.

SE **susan eppard** 1:37:10

Yes.

R1 Room 140 1:37:11

And eppard.

SE susan eppard 1:37:12

My name is yes.

Hello, my name is Susan Eppard and I support banning all forms of kratom in 2021.

My 22 year old son Matthew Eller died from whole leaf kratom powder, the least potent form of kratom available in the United States.

Kratom caused him to have a seizure, go into cardiac arrest and die of violent death on his kitchen floor in front of his girlfriend. His toxicology showed he died from the toxic effects of metrogenane, an alkaloid found only in kratom.

He had no prescription drugs, no St. drugs nor alcohol in his system when he died in his autopsy showed he had no underlying health conditions, and it's very important to note that my son did not die from 708 or 7 hydroxy metrogeny. Kratom is not rout.

Tested for post mortem as many users hide their usage and even when families know about it, they don't think likely think to ask for toxicologies.

Because they are.

It's advertised as a safe herbal subst.

Ance.

You likely received many calls, but keep in mind.

R1 Room 140 1:38:11

Thank you, Susan.

Michelle Ross.

DR Dr. Michele Ross 1:38:16

Hi there.

Thank you everyone.

I'm an addiction expert and court qualified kratom expert and I did a research study on 70 of 15121 users, 8% are veterans, 2% are current or retired law enforcement, 12% of users are healthcare professionals.

So I want to be clear here that there's a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding about who 70 consumers are.

Who kratom users are in the safety?

In this presentation, it's been stated that not a lot of metrogening and kratom is converted to 70 H, 24% of the metrogony is over.

There's over 2.4 million kratom users in California, and every single one of them has a high level of 70 H in their body right now.

So there is not a crisis from 70 H products. We need regulations for the entire product category and I would like to be available as an expert to help.

R1 **Room 140** 1:39:13

Skip.

DR **Dr. Michele Ross** 1:39:15

Guide some of the misinformation.

And that's been presented here and elsewhere, especially by the FDA.

R1 **Room 140** 1:39:21

Thank you.

Jordan.

J **Jordan** 1:39:29

OK, my name is Jordan Richard.

I'm author of the truth about Kratom Life saving plan, botanical menace. I spent years traveling across the United States and Southeast Asia interviewing leading experts, toxicologists, policymakers, farmers, and people who have used kratom and have been directly affected by kratom.

I'm writing you to urge not to ban kratom in Los Angeles.

You're comparing 2 very different substances.

Kratom is a natural leaf that has been used continuously in Southeast Asia for more than 1000 years.

There's never been a single death attributed to kratom.

Millions of people.

For all that time, not one single death in 2024.

The US Food and Drug Administration released their first human study on kratom.

Include that kratom appears to be safe.

It's critical to be clear the FDA approval and FDA stating substances are safe are

obviously 222 different things.

Plants don't.

You can't have plants that are FDA approved.

What matters is that the FDA's own research did not support the claim that natural kratom leaf is inherently dangerous. The FDA.

Commissioner has publicly stated that the agency is not targeting the natural.

Leave, but rather isolates and semi synthetic.

R1 Room 140 1:40:32

Thank you.

J Jordan 1:40:33

Products, yeah.

Thank you.

R1 Room 140 1:40:35

Thank you, Jennifer Gillis.

JG Jennifer Gillis 1:40:40

Yes, hi. My name is Jennifer Gillet. And 20 years ago, I was diagnosed with transverse myelitis and became a lifelong chronic pain patient. After losing access to prescription medications that I had relied upon for so long, through no fault of my own, I spent years struggling to manage.

Pain one day in 2019, I discovered holy crap on powder.

It truly gave my life back.

Kratom has been a lifeline for so many people just like me who want to live a functional, meaningful life and not have to deal with chronic pain.

I'm asking that you support regulation like lab testing, age restrictions and also limiting the amount of 708.

In the kratom.

That are available to the public.

Thank you.

R1 Room 140 1:41:30

You, Amanda Reiner.

AR **Amanda Rainer** 1:41:34

Hi, my name is Amanda. I live with 10 out of 20 of the most painful conditions to live with. Trigeminal neuralgia being one of them. I was thrown on pain medication at the early age of nine. I was also on depression medication, blood pressure medication and anxiety medic.

And the last almost eight years, or almost 8 1/2 years, I have not had to consume well over 550 thousand.

Pharmaceutical pills. I also lost my mom's to the hands of the pain clinic.

My doctor told me there's no way that I can treat you properly.

We cannot properly treat you, so I suggest you look for alternatives, which I did and I found kratom.

I also utilized 708 when I have Crohn's disease flares.

I am not an addict.

I am disabled and I am able to function every single day with kratom and my 702 tips away from me.

My life will not exist anymore because I cannot live or be treated by the doctors.

Ever again. Thank you so much.

R1 **Room 140** 1:42:37

Thank you, Venus usher.

vu **Venus Usher** 1:42:41

Good afternoon.

My name is Venus Usher, and I'm asking you to keep plain leaf kratom legal, regulated, and not banned in 2000.

An FDA approved medication caused severe kidney stones and constant pain, and many illnesses for 17 years.

Doctors didn't believe me.

I was labeled a drug addict, sent to rehab and put through unnecessary surgeries, including a botched hysterectomy, and then nine years ago, I found plainly of kratom T.

It's simply a crushed leaf made into a tea.

R1 Room 140 1:43:08

Thank you.

vu Venus Usher 1:43:09

The relief was immediate.

And stronger.

Sorry kittens and stronger and help me better than anything I'd ever tried in nearly two decades.

It allowed me to finally undergo a three hour surgery that proved my pain was real and afterwards I refused.

Prescription drugs had them removed my four and finished drinking my kratom tea in the hospital. I healed plainly.

Kratom does not cause respiratory depression, has a natural safety limit.

People use it responsibly to live normal lives.

Bans don't protect people.

They criminalize people like Marshall Brown, who got 10 years and was murdered in prison, and Shayna Brown, who's facing 10 years in jail.

R1 Room 140 1:43:47

Yes.

Ryan Sherman.

Again.

rs ryan sherman 1:43:56

Hi my name's.

Yes, my name's Ryan Sherman. I'm with the California Narcotic Officers Association and we are in complete support of any all restrictions. County is willing to take on 7 hydroxy concentrated synthetic products. We've been working throughout the state with counties and cities.

To ban this substance, we believe it's very dangerous.

And lethal. And I don't want to take my word for it on the back of these products.

Many of them contain the following warning, not use product in combination with any psychoactive intoxicating impairing substance, including other botanicals, alcohol, nicotine, cannabinoids or illicit substances.

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Don't use if you have health conditions or use prescription medicine over the counter drugs or dietary supplements, except under supervision of a physician.

R1 Room 140 1:44:50

Yeah.

RS ryan sherman 1:44:54

Don't use before engaging dangerous activities, operating machinery or operating a vehicle.

Products not intended to be used with alcohol, nickels, prescriptions, etc.

R1 Room 140 1:45:01

Thank you.

Thank you.

RS ryan sherman 1:45:05

Thank you.

R1 Room 140 1:45:06

Thank you, Susan cave.

SC Susan A Cave 1:45:10

Yes, ma'am.

Can you hear me OK?

R1 Room 140 1:45:12

Yes, we can.

SC Susan A Cave 1:45:13

Yes, my name's Susan cave.

I'm the mother of William Cave who passed in 2024 to de Kratom.

I want you to know that my testimony is not just about my son, although I am a grieving mother states that have chosen regulation are now seeing the consequences.

Continued deaths, escalating product potency and a false sense of security.

Might I ask you?

Do you really think regulations are enforceable?

Do you think regulations can keep up with the ever evolving one point?

\$5 billion kratom industry do you think bad actors won't enter the market and exploit this product?

Do you question your knowledge about kratom and what it's doing to families around the country?

R1 Room 140 1:45:49

No.

Thank you.

SC Susan A Cave 1:45:54

Do you think it would be the right thing to do to ban 70 H and only regulate kratom that contains 70 H?

Does it go against your good common sense to look at 70 H as a completely separate animal from kratom when raw kratom contains 7OH, do you think people can be responsible?

Creating consumers when so little is known about how to consume kratom safely.

No lethal dose has been stacked.

R1 Room 140 1:46:20

Laredo.

GL Geoffrey Laredo 1:46:25

Good afternoon.

My name is Jeff.

R1 Room 140 1:46:26

Hello. Thank you. Go ahead.

GL Geoffrey Laredo 1:46:27

Can you hear me all right.

My name is Jeff Laredo.

I spent 30 years as a federal drug use and addiction science policy official. Now a

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California resident and a consultant to the American Kratom Association.

I'm here today to urge you to rely on science and evidence as you consider this motion and any follow up actions that you choose to take.

Don't be distracted by all the hyperbole that you hear.

I want to fully agree.

With and associate myself with Matthew Lowe's remarks and and others about kratom versus 70. The AKA fully supports regulation and LA County has a really well earned reputation for sophistication and reliance on science and scientific evidence.

When it comes to public health.

So in this case, let's add even more evidence for that reputation.

Thanks very much.

R1 Room 140 1:47:21

You a caller with the phone number ending 9696.

RS ryan sherman 1:47:27

Yes.

R1 Room 140 1:47:30

760-412-9696.

Press *6 to.

Some OK gold leaf botanicals.

GB Gold Leaf Botanicals 1:47:48

Hi, my name is Rob Nichols. I own gold leaf botanicals.

+17***96** 1:47:51

I.

GB Gold Leaf Botanicals 1:47:53

Can you all hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:47:58

Ted, I can hear you.

 +17*****96 1:48:04

Hi, can you hear me?

 Room 140 1:48:06

Yes, we can go ahead.

 +17*****96 1:48:08

OK, perfect.

 Gold Leaf Botanicals 1:48:09

I'm sorry, I had the voice thing.

 +17*****96 1:48:10

Yeah. My name is Brian.

So I've been taking kratom and working with people that have been successfully using Kraven to manage chronic pain conditions, suicidal ideation.

Opiate addiction communicate kratom is an effective alternative to.

Harmful synthetic drugs and.

The same is counted in the isolated incidents of adverse reactions to supposedly plainly creatine, like my heart goes out to people that have lost family. The creation does at least does not kill, like there may be a few isolated incidents, but it saves millions annually.

 Room 140 1:48:55

Thank you.

 +17*****96 1:48:57

So.

 Room 140 1:49:07

Thank you.

You can go ahead and unmute yourself and speak.

M **Matthew** 1:49:11

Hello there. My name is Matthew Shabira.

R1 **Room 140** 1:49:12

Honey.

M **Matthew** 1:49:14

I'm a resident in Irvine, CA.

I'm just here to say my pieces just like an average guy.

There are definitely companies out there that are really dedicated towards making products that contain kratom responsibly, and I'm a consumer of one of those. One of those products is nubru.

It's a very mild effects.

It's been nothing but a benefit to me just in my.

Everyday life, it just helps calm you know, it gives you a calm sensation.

There's nothing addictive about it, so I know that the founder is really.

Prominent. He's a big advocate on doing and creating these products responsibly, and I definitely think that there's a right way to go about this and a wrong way and a outright blanket ban would certainly be one of the wrong ways.

R1 **Room 140** 1:49:53

Good morning.

M **Matthew** 1:50:05

So thank you so much for your time.

R1 **Room 140** 1:50:08

Thank you.

All right, we'll try this one more time with gold leaf botanicals, since the person calling in had started speaking.

So we look at botanicals.

Go ahead, you can unmute yourself.

Old leaf botanicals.

While we see that, there you go, you're unmuted, go ahead and speak again.

GB **Gold Leaf Botanicals** 1:50:35

I'm sorry. Can can you hear me? OK. Thank you.

R1 **Room 140** 1:50:38

Go ahead.

GB **Gold Leaf Botanicals** 1:50:40

My name is Rob Nichols.

After discovering kratom, I started a business, which is what's displayed to you.

I don't know how to fix that yet.

Anyway, when back in 2015, I was in a hospital and I was addicted to the opiate, the drug. I didn't even remember the name. But I got addicted to it in one day.

In one day I became addicted to this drug and I was introduced to kratom, and kratom helped get me off of that.

Kratom leaf powder does not slow the breathing.

The addiction.

I'm 32 years clean and sober everyday in my business.

I help people, chronic pain, people and numerous variety of them that have no other solution and they find out about kratom and their life is changed in addiction.

There's not just a physical addiction, there's also a mental addiction, which?

Nobody has spoke about which also needs to be addressed. As I said, I'm 32 years clean and sober.

There is God and I'm not hit and I'm done, man.

Thank you very much.

Kratom needs to be kept safe and legal.

R1 **Room 140** 1:51:47

Right. So before we close public comments, I'm just going to ask if anybody who is calling in would like to speak and wasn't able to raise their hand. If you want to unmute yourself using *6. If so, we'll call you by your phone number.

Anybody calling in want to speak?

+18***77** 1:52:08

Yes. Can you guys, can you hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:52:12

Yes.

+19***93** 1:52:12

OK.

R1 Room 140 1:52:13

Phone number 2973.

+18***77** 1:52:13

Hello. Hello.

+19***93** 1:52:14

Yes.

R1 Room 140 1:52:15

Yes, go ahead.

+18***77** 1:52:17

Yeah, 2977.

R1 Room 140 1:52:17

Three from the right. I'm going to call 2977 first.

+19***93** 1:52:21

Well, you're in Texas. Yes, go ahead.

+18***77** 1:52:21

Can you hear me?

I just want to keep my name's Adam Blom.

I'm a consumer and a retailer and I just want to make this put this in really simple terms.

I like to when I talk about this, I like to compare it to coffee.

Coffee's been around for forever. Millions of people use it every day.

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It's familiar, relatively low risk, and then imagine someone comes around. They isolate the caffeine, they super concentrate it, they put it to a tiny pill.

And they start selling it aggressively and then people start dying.

Getting hurt, that's what's happening here. And you wouldn't go.

And you wouldn't ban coffee, you come up with a way to get rid of this crazy high potency extract that has just come on the market. A few years ago, when coffee's been around for thousands of years.

And that's what's happening.

Kratom leaf is the coffee and the 70 products are the Super potent synthetic caffeine pills that somebody's come out and now everyone's getting hurt.

It's very clear to me what to do.

You regulate kratom, you get rid of 70 H you know right now, a four year old can walk into a store and buy kratom.

That's ridiculous.

Everyone's known that even all these brands have known it.

You should regulate kratom.

It should be 21 and over and products should not have.

R1 Room 140 1:53:31

Thank you for your comment.

I've already called on 9696.

I'm not going to call on that again.

Phone number ending in 2493.

+19***93 1:53:42**

Hi, that's me.

My name is. Can you hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:53:47

Yes.

+19***93 1:53:48**

My name is Dionne Evans and I'm a kratom consumer and have been for the last nine years.

R1 Room 140 1:53:49

Yeah.

+19***93 1:53:56**

I am terminal when the epidemic hit with the opioids, everyone was dropped from pain, pain, relief and pain meds.

I was 1/2 an hour away from taking my own life after a year of trying to make.

And trying to find some way of getting through my life.

And that's when I found kratom.

Kratom. Everyone compares it to opioids.

It's nothing like an opioid, but yet it relieves enough pain for people to get by.

It's changed my life and it's given me nine years with my family that I would not have had if it weren't for kratom and it just gave me my first great grandchild.

R1 Room 140 1:54:41

Yes.

Thank you, Dion. Thank you, Dion.

Phone number ending in 1655.

I'm sorry, 1665.

+19***65 1:55:02**

Hi, that's me. Can you hear me?

R1 Room 140 1:55:04

And go ahead.

+19***65 1:55:06**

Hi so my name is Evan. I live in Irvine but I used to live in Los Angeles and I work in Los Angeles.

R1 Room 140 1:55:07

Good.

+19***65 1:55:15**

So I've, you know, I've been a consumer of kratom as well as seven omits but less frequently. But the reason I guess why I'm calling today, there are a lot of issues in LA County right now.

Homelessness fentanyl overdose.

Says. I mean, this is really below the radar and I'm kind of surprised to respectfully say that, you know, this is being even discussed at the public health emergency.

R1 Room 140 1:55:35

Thank you.

+19***65 1:55:47**

I don't know of any deaths that have occurred solely due to seven. Oh, I I'm sorry.

R1 Room 140 1:55:49

Austrian.

+19***65 1:55:56**

Can you hear me still?

R1 Room 140 1:55:59

Concludes total comment on this item.

Yes. All right. Thank you. OK.

Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Allison Burton. I want.

I want to be very clear banning or criminalizing kratom in seven oh would cause real harm.

I suffer from severe, debilitating migraines when one hits functioning as impossible.

The slightest light feels like I'm being stabbed in the head.

The famous smell makes me violently nauseous, sounding movement amplify the pain and even opening my eyes can be unbearable.

It's not just a headache, it's a total physical shutdown.

I am highly allergic to Sumatriptan, one of the primary migraine rescue medications.

Your standard treatments have failed me.

Item is the only helps during an active migraine and allows me to function.

Do you criminalize it?

You are not protecting public health.

You are taking away the only effective option some of us have when medicine fails.

Do not legislate me into suffering when safer regulation is available.

Thank you all so much for taking.

Deputy, we received 31,000 letters prior to the meeting and more by now. We'll be sure that those are part of the meeting record and they will.

Goes to the full board.

And the press for public comment in the chat window in case callers or folks online, but additional written public comment, there's a significant amount of comment as well.

Can we chat?

Thank you everyone for your comments and for those who shared your stories of family members passing. Thank you so much.

Thank you.

Thank you.

 +19*****65 1:57:42

I didn't get the. I'm sorry I didn't get the opportunity though to speak and and I was called on in, in five seconds, it ended.

 Room 140 1:57:52

So much colleagues, we have another motion before you and this is.

Hazardous environmental issues the county jails so for decades we have had companies like people who are incarcerated in Lake County approvals as well as and advocates.

OMG, more recently Silvan Commission.

Of a task by the board to do jail inspections. I've reported observing brown breast colored water coming out of the closets.

Off smells and have seen worms coming out of the pipes.

Additionally, civil brand commissioners have taken photos of the Brown Water collective and water bottles and Q on. I know I sent you a photo of a one that Commissioner.

But we know that DPH have conducted inspections. However, their inspections are limited to whether there is water coming out where where it's supposed to, and whether the water is hot. Should they see any issues with the water, they will notify

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and violate the Sheriff's Department to resolve so.

I shared almost every advocacy organization oversight entity, have looked into this issue.

However, the problem subsists.

I've actually requested Hailey Roeder, who is chair of the Civil Rights Commission, to share what she has seen.

I'm gonna ask that she.

Haley broder. I am the chair of the Civil Brand Commission for tasked by the Board of Supervisors to conduct unannounced inspections across the LA County jails and lock up facilities. We do that.

We spend quite a bit of time at CRDF, one of those jails over the last two plus years that I've been on, every single time we've gone into CRDF.

Heard complaints from those who are incarcerated there about the issues with the water.

We have seen for ourselves the picture. For example, you can see on the board.

Brown water coming out of the pipes directly.

We've also seen Clearwater coming out of the pipes.

This is not just a one off.

We're saying this is happening all the time, seeing both constantly hearing from those who are incarcerated that they do not feel the water is safe to drink here from deputies who work there, that they would not drink the water. There's constant jokes being made about the water there.

Are certain days that we are there.

That butter bottles are brought out. The women say that it is because we are doing these inspections, that they are then getting water to drink.

Is taking there is water to purchase that requires loved ones on the outside to put money in books.

That creates an undue burden on communities who have to pay for water when water should be a right for us to be able to drink safely around observed sewer moths.

Coming out of train observed.

Really just despicable, disgusting water situations.

The pipes are really gross.

They have had watch commanders tell us that that is a linguine problem and not a jail problem. We've had deputies and watch commanders tell us that there is really

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nothing that they can do.

We've had many different accounts where they have told us on different days.

Again, these infections span monthly years.

Of randomized inspections where we are hearing the same things coming up across all different modules also. So we're not going to the same module every time, for example.

There's in 3700 who were reporting that there is brown water coming out of the taps.

We are hearing it in 2600.

We're hearing it in 31.

100 We're hearing it all across the jail in different areas where people are being treated.

This is not a one off issue.

It's across the jail.

It requested at the Department of Public Health to conduct an inspection and look into this issue.

A wide inspection of water and reported that there were indeed these sewer moths.

They sent me a picture of of the worms and the larvae and the orphan.

Across the showers, along with activities for the jail to take to get rid of those.

We are continuing to hear there are issues with the water.

The inspections came back clear.

Inspections showed that the water that they sought was drink.

Who went to the jail?

CRDF herself.

Also, she drank the water, which was, you know, for her that it was safe to drink.

We're continuing to hear from the women that that is not the case and that there are concerns this issue has been going on for such a long time.

There's there's kind of a dual side to it, I think where one side you're hearing constantly will do not feel safe to drink the water. That smells really highly of chlorine.

It it really leaks?

Sometimes you'll walk into an area or cell and you can't even breathe.

It's just so full of those.

Issues directly to commanders, but try to address that.

It's really a disgusting issue and so those who are incarcerated make sure that the water they're drinking is the water that we.

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And they don't need to spend money on water bottles that are actually restricted in the amount that they're able to purchase per week.

People are saying that they're dehydrated, that they're not drinking the water because they don't feel it safe.

So they're getting utilities that they're getting other health issues.

Is because they're not consuming the water, and they're also the thing that they're getting. Different rashes and things like that from the water.

Again, I am not this from the sense of public health reports from the water.

I'm hearing this directly from those who are incarcerated.

We're hearing it across the jails, so it's not a one off issue.

And the what we're seeing, what we're smelling, what we're observing, what we're hearing from the women.

And this is highly concerning.

So we do want to make sure this is and we are glad that public health is going out and continuing to do these inspections and really, really appreciate the attention, the focus and dedication here and civilian to do inspections.

To see what's going on and continue to follow up.

Thanks so much, Haley.

And so just to conclude, we are gonna be making some changes to the director.

So I am sharing a copy of that and we'll make sure that we.

Cosette for the public but the directors, we've added an additional 2 directives and we made some changes to Directive 1, so Directive one now reads requested Los Angeles Sheriff's Department in collaboration with Department of Public Health and Civil brand Commission to address, mitigate and resolve the water.

Quality and safety issues presented in all county jails within 180 days or earlier and 60 days after resolution provide the Board of Supervisors report back.

In writing on steps taken to resolve the immediate issues in a plan to address any future water quality and chair director two and three will remain, but the additional 2.

So we have Directive 4 questions, conduct a thorough infrastructure assessment to identify water quality clause with the local.

Water agencies with assistance of the Department of Public Health to improve water quality in the LA County jails, along with implementing other recommendation and best practices.

And Directive 5.

Direct the Department of Public Health to conduct a survey of the water quality

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testing results and the water purveyor supporting all the county jails for the past five years.

Trying to find any water quality issues in the water supply, assess within its existing authority and currently available resources, any additional actions or support that can provide to strengthen oversight and ensure safe and reliable drinking water facilities and report back findings to the board and writing in 90.

Days.

And then we have the further Move Directive that have remained the same and I want to thank DPH for.

For providing the assistance with Directive 5, because the issue as shared this is a decade long issue.

And we agree with civil brand Commission that water should be safe to drink.

Or us on the outs, but also those who are incarcerated.

That will answer any questions that the my colleagues might have.

I know the DOJ does reports and complaints.

Do they highlight the water issues in their reports as well?

So I know that we have Rutherford, which is a 1974.

Meg around 218 since the business part of it deals are also.

15 in Title 22 that also receive water and also.

But I'm not sure in terms of specifics. They're looking at that.

We do know that they're looking at conditions of compliance.

So water quality and safety would would soon, you know, be part be part of that.

We appreciate him. Thank you.

For.

They seem just helpful.

There are other highlighted apart from the water, like air quality and if that's something that your DPHS purview as well or something else.

Question. Thank you for across all of the different jails.

Yes, we do see massive air quality issues, especially in MCJ you walk in and you immediately have this overpowering sense of smoke.

Across the facility you just you can smell it like the second you're walking in. It's completely overpowering.

We have people there who have asthma, who are reporting issues breathing.

There's also very visible mold across a lot of MCJ, and that is causing breathing issues as well.

There's issues in certain areas where people are very cold and that air filtration systems have been kind of like closed off or.

Diverted in some way.

And that causes very, very fluctuating temperatures across different parts of the jail.

Mentally, they air quality is is a huge aspect of it.

I also just want to mention briefly.

 +19*****54 2:08:31

The seat hub.

 Room 140 2:08:33

During Commission brought up that there's a pretty massive dew of sexual violence.

At the CRDF field in particular right now.

And that's a health crisis that lead environmental is very much a public health crisis that needs to be addressed and civil bran continues to bring up is that we are hearing horrific.

Like perfect stories of sexual violence, rape.

Harassment by deputies of those who incarcerated.

Review on the air quality, especially, is that also something that is within their purview?

So to your point, we have on our further more directive we have asked for information to provide the board with a report back on other environmental hazards because we know that there are water safety issues and that there's a lot of flooding and leaky pipes that impact if.

 +19*****54 2:09:27

So if I.

An approximate amount for that. If I transfer 6000 over, we're good, OK.

 Room 140 2:09:31

You take a look at Silver Commission.

Of course, they are constantly talking about.

Some of the infrastructure issues and we know that there are more. And so part of this is taking this kind of you know into multi step. So asking for a brand to look at other there's including you know air quality and and and others on the piece around.

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Priya, the prisoner of Elimination Act and the and the abuses that are folks in CRDF and other jails across, I know our office has done motions around and we do doing a follow up.

Even though we asked our relevant stakeholders to do report backs and you know, town halls, you know, with community and and impacted.

So that is a follow up motion that we plan on doing because agreed that sexual assaults and sexual abuse is also available health issue.

Just one last question first.

Thank you so much for your motion and thank you for elevating this issue.

Understanding that we have very pipes, I obviously don't know what the cause is and I know we're elevating the infrastructure here.

Makes sense?

Also, maybe include in the report back investment of cost.

So include that in in directed wherever you want it, just when whenever the report back in terms of.

To identify. Mm-hmm. How they're going to fix this because that the cost will be 'cause I I worry that if this has been an issue for some time, it might be more of an infrastructure costly issue that maybe nobody's really investigated or can't because of funding issues.

Thank you.

Any thought on this item?

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Item presentation item 8 from.

17.

Through February 2820.

I think you can think in three days and maybe the governor of a single item was working in a public comments.

That's great, actually, Maria.

Good afternoon, colleagues.

So we're here to request your support.

To extend.

17 agreements that are currently in place and two additional agreements.

That are separate.

The reenact your support.

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Support to extend oral health contracts to help contracts in one legal services contract with the Industry Law Center.

In March 1st of this year.

Full investment.

Is a little over \$9 million for both. Mostly investment is for oral health services.

Across 12 partners Combined Board letters.

And six mental health services.

OK. The contracts will be offset by Ryan White program resources.

That we could get from federal government.

Also asking for your support to give delegate authority.

The contract law is lower reality change the scope of work for extended term through June 30, June 30th.

The additional one.

So I'll stop there.

Basic Summary answer questions about the plan.

OK, Scott.

Federal funds.

Did you see?

Yeah, that does not come through.

And how much?

In different levels we get some.

Sure. So so a few things.

One, I think it's important to note that Hersa has put in writing.

The tremendous.

Cost of disruption caused by their delays in funding.

Last August.

What we got from them was a letter saying.

We expect you to get this amount of funding the next Ryan White term funding market.

12026.

All the sort of caveats and on the erasure test bill white program.

For for those of us tracking this closely, we know that the Senate put forward over the weekend Labor HHS bill that fully funds the Ryan White program fully funds the division of HIV prevention in two areas. Our office has been looking at very, very closely. The signs are.

Very positive.

You know, the house expected to vote this week, and then the Senate will come back next week and hopefully.

Bill will move forward to the White House, so that's very encouraging.

RN because we need to have a contingency plan, we have sent a letter to doctor. California Office of AIDS that asked her.

For \$11 million.

Help offset the first three months of the Ryan White program cycle, which starts March 1.

11,000,000 to this 25% of our \$44 million.

So we get in part a formula supplemental Mai combined, we're asking for patient that would allow us to continue the contracts, not just Steve but others that are currently in place.

We do not get.

Beds. And if we get a commitment from the state to give us.

Adap rebate funds.

We need to issue contract.

Well, issue letters to provide.

As waterproof contracts, there's a 30 day.

That's noticing.

Needs to be given.

What we will propose is that extend contracts at a nominal amount.

Ask get to that point not to.

Continue the contract.

And it's the same reason we used.

You and if you terminate a contract.

Then act on your agenda for approval.

There's a lot of ways, but also more importantly, there are many of these contractors who are able to do the 40B program.

By location's at very low cost.

Wanna preserve that mechanism for our community based organizations?

So and we had slightly different process, but we would recommend not ending them entirely if you want to have that mechanism.

Resources to be.

Getting adapted from the state seem promising. It does.

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So there is \$65 million sitting in that fund right now, 10 million out of 75 was used to support DIS.

And I will have program but there is \$65 million in there.

It does.

The budget released last week, there's no mention of a new allocation to pay back the ADA rebate fund for the next state fiscal year.

So those resources are available, we just need.

8 leaders to support that, but you know.

He's sitting in there.

My question is, gentlemen, to her doctor Ramos, who the state respond.

They haven't yet had them, you know, meeting with Doctor Bromwell's in two weeks to go over spending and her spending projections and our spending and our spending projections. She said that as early as today, Specter that would Friday.

Questions from board offices.

Have a comment on 3A or three BH?

What we want to present is item 3C.

Department of Public Works.

All of you DLA Medical Center campus.

Good morning, afternoon.

Not sure where it is anymore.

Thanks for having us, Jillian T public works.

I've brought my department DMH Damian Parker up with me.

So we're here to talk about the all of you UCLA continuum Care facility board letter that is slated for February 10th, 2026.

So a little background on all of you.

It's a Medical Center up in the Sylmar area. We've previously completed various mental or behavioral health facilities.

On the campus, including a crisis residential, a mental health, urgent care and outpatient programs.

So this future continuum of care project, we really complete the continuum of healthcare by providing those services that really aren't touched on by these existing programs.

So it provides varying levels of acuity for mental health to reduce the reliance on inpatient psychiatric.

Our future, all of you. Continue care facility.

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Will be about 60,000 square feet.

It's going to be about 3 stories, give or take, and will include three separate programs.

So that's a mental health rehabilitation center, a psychiatric health facility and a social rehabilitation program.

So all three of those are intended to have 16 beds each for a total of 48 beds.

That's just a little context on the continuum of care project.

Right now we have actually gained board approval back in December to.

Approve the project, the budget and awarded design build agreement to penta.

And that design build agreement was for approximately \$79 million with the maximum contract sum of about \$86 million.

However, upon execution of that contract with Penta, we have determined that a termination for convenience of this agreement is really in the county's best interest, but not only will resolving this project.

Allow for the county to move, so I'll give you a little more history on this. When we completed the scoping documents for the project, this was before we understood how much funding had been awarded.

So we completed the scoping documents based on a certain scope.

We received the amount of funding. It greatly exceeded what we could afford.

So I mean what we designed to do at this point we are recommending that we do resolicit to allow us to really design the program and construct the program in accordance with our budget. If you do recall, the original board letter had a significant budget more than.

Twice what we would usually carry in a project like this. A design build project so.

What we're actually recommending is move forward with.

And new solicitation under progressive design build this progressive design build contract would really allow an iterative process.

It would allow us to incorporate additional features that had not really been contemplated. The original design completion when we did the scoping documents, you know we could.

We plan on adding some shade structures, some additional seating, as well as additional lighting, again with the intention to maximize those dollars.

So the BSIP funding in the that we've received.

Is a total of \$130 million and that includes the 10% county match.

So the project budget as approved is \$130 million.

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We anticipate that budget will remain and our resiliency in the future will be within that 130 million previously approved total project budget.

So some of the recommendations in this board letter include, first of all, finding that the recommended actions are not a project.

Pursuant to SQA, determined that it is in the county's best interest to terminate the design build agreement for convenience, allow public works to notify formally penta that we do plan on terminating for convenience and, last but not least, authorize the Director of Public Works to enter into.

A termination agreement for a not to exceed.

Value of \$100,000 that \$100,000 is to support, essentially reimburse them for reasonable costs it has heard and is really the same as the stipend that was paid to the second and third ranked proposers so.

Questions.

So just wanted to follow up on the 100,000 the termination piece.

So I know that's not to exceed 100,000.

Do we know like what the exact amount will be?

It will probably be right around 100,000.

Be eligible to re bid as well. Anticipate they will.

Thank you so much for all your work on this.

We're very excited about this project.

Thanks for your support.

Public comment.

Eight, we don't have any continued items concluding or any. So we'll move on to the.

Do we have any general comment on today's agenda?

So if I have anything.

- **Kieu-Anh King** stopped transcription