

HB 968 – Make Kratom a Schedule I substance

Legislative Rubric from Science for Georgia

[HB 968](#) states that mitragynine and hydroxymitragynine, commonly known as kratom, are to be considered as Schedule I controlled substances.

Kratom is derived from tree leaves and has been historically used in [traditional medicines](#) and therapeutic practices, it is emerging as a replacement for those with [opioid use disorder](#). The concern is that highly concentrated kratom may have [opioid-like impacts and addictive qualities](#). [Schedule I controlled substances are those the government deems harmful to health, such as LSD and opioids.](#)

Criteria	Variables			
Impact Who is going to be impacted? Is it equitable? List stakeholders & opinions.	Negative		Positive	
	Unclear. This bill will negatively impact those with chronic pain or recovering opioid users by making them unable to use this pain reliever; however, if kratom is addictive like opioids, making it illegal may be warranted. Governmental agencies, like the HHS and FDA , approve a ban; however, kratom advocates and some lawmakers remain opposed. The DEA attempted to schedule kratom in 2016 but retracted after public outcry.			
Reach Does it reach its target audience?	0 - No impact on target audience.	1 - Impacts narrow segment.	2 - Impacts majority; exceptions.	3 - Impacts entire target audience
	If kratom is to be considered a schedule 1 substance, this will affect its availability in a commercial sphere and thus affect Georgia residents equally.			
Scientific Merit Does it utilize scientific research accurately?	YES - this does follow scientific research accurately. Here's why....		NO - this does not present scientific research accurately.	
	Although the research on kratom remains limited, there is some evidence of an association with negative health effects. Derived from tree leaves in Southeast Asia, kratom is used in traditional medicines and therapeutic practices, and is often used as a replacement for those with opioid use disorder . Though the FDA recommended scheduling kratom, there is insufficient evidence that kratom alone increases the risk of adverse health effects.			
Financial Feasibility Is it financially feasible? or does this have burdensome finances (higher taxes, future costs, etc)?	0 - Extremely high costs	1 - Expensive but can be done	2 - Slight	3 - No financial burden
	There is no burdensome finances associated with scheduling kratom as a Schedule I controlled substance. A risk, however, remains in kratom being more difficult and expensive for researchers to study.			

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Political Feasibility Level of opposition and partisan disagreement.	0 - Majority disagreed, regardless of party.	1 – Split along party lines	2 - Minimal Opposition	3 - Complete consensus (zero to five 'Nays').
	No votes yet. The bill has 6 sponsors, all of whom are Republican.			
Measurable Metrics? We recommend looking at these 3 metrics. Is the data available or being measured?	0 - no data	1 - some data / not accessible	2 - most data / somewhat accessible	3 - complete transparency
	The current research on kratom is limited; a lack of clinical trials and weak toxicology testing makes it difficult to determine the necessity of this bill.			