



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

## Senator Helming, Assembly Majority Leader Morelle Introduce Legislation to Ban Sale of Kratom to Minors

JONATHAN MONFILETTO - 315-568-9816 November 30, 2017

GENEVA – Senator Pam Helming and Assemblyman Majority Leader Joe Morelle today announced introduction of legislation ([S6924/A8787](#)) that will prohibit individuals under the age of 18 from purchasing, possessing, or using any products containing kratom. The bill would amend the public health law to define and regulate kratom as well as direct the New York State Department of Health to conduct a study on the benefits and risks of kratom.

“During my recent roundtable discussion on the heroin and opioid crisis, I was proud to announce my sponsorship of this bill to prohibit minors from purchasing kratom. It is important that we regulate and control its sale to minors. This legislation shows that we take seriously the addiction crisis that is plaguing our families and communities instead of just paying lip service to it. I look forward to advocating for this measure in the upcoming legislative session, and I thank Assemblyman Morelle for his partnership on this measure,” **Senator Helming said.**

“Substance abuse is a scourge plaguing communities across our state, spanning all socioeconomic backgrounds, and devastating countless families and individuals both young and old. Regulating the sale and usage of kratom is a critical step toward protecting our young people from the perils of addiction. I am grateful to Senator Helming for her partnership on this important bipartisan legislation, and I remain committed to advocating

for further education and research on the effects of kratom so we may better safeguard our communities,” **Assembly Majority Leader Morelle said.**

Senator Helming learned about the potential dangers of kratom while attending the “High in Plain Sight: Substance Abuse Awareness & Prevention” event hosted by the Seneca Falls Central School District at the end of September. Kratom is a tropical tree in the coffee family originating in Southeast Asia, where it has been used as an herbal drug, and it is easily available to school-age children.

While kratom is believed to have some medical benefits, it is also believed to have a high potential for abuse and addiction. In 2016, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) moved to ban its sale and classify it as a Schedule I drug due to it being an imminent hazard to public safety. This decision was ultimately delayed to allow for further research.

Despite the medical potential, there are serious concerns and unknowns with kratom. Until it is further researched, the sale of kratom to our children must be regulated. This legislation would do just that, prohibiting individuals under the age of 18 from purchasing or possessing kratom in any form.

Several states have defined kratom as a synthetic drug and controlled substance. Countries such as Australia, Finland, Denmark, Poland, Lithuania, and Sweden have made kratom illegal.

*Senator Helming represents the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which consists of Seneca and Wayne Counties, parts of Cayuga and Ontario Counties, and the towns of Lansing and Webster. For more information, please visit Senator Helming’s [website](#), or follow @SenatorHelming on Facebook or Twitter.*

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