

**Honorable Duly Elected Officials,**

I am writing to you today as I look at the public speaker card that I obtained while I sat and observed my first council hearing under the control of the Finance, Governance, and Public Safety Committee. I am also looking at the legislation details (with text) in regard to Ordinance Number 251028. This is also referred to as the "Ban on Gas Station Drugs" in the media. As you noticed there was a large number of constituents that responded to the said ordinance. At first I was disappointed that I did not speak at the 12/09/2025 meeting because of the ordinance being held, but now I am actually glad. As I have had time to reflect I came to the conclusion that the members of the committee felt it best to allow the people to think about the issue before they came in there all fiery and "shooting from the hip" per say about this ordinance due to passionate personal feelings on this matter.

First and foremost I'd like to give my personal opinion before I delve into possible solutions. This would most match what I would have said 12/09/2025.

- Any substance that resembles a street drug should be banned. Kratom and 7-hydroxymitragynine (derivative of kratom commonly known as 7-OH) which is more commonly referred to "gas station heroin" because of its opioid inducing effects. Opioids that are similar to 7-OH are Heroin, Morphine, Oxycodone, and Hydrocodone. Should be banned.
- Delta-8, Delta-9, and hemp derived cannabinoids are Cannabis. Plain and simple. However it is worded I am personally advocating for "Let us separate Cannabis from common street drugs and let us just call it Cannabis". This is where I would specifically iterate on what I determine a street drug as would law enforcement officers, EMTs, and paramedics would agree. That a street drug is anything that has the potential for a life threatening overdose. However it is worded Cannabis has no potential for a life threatening overdose. I have friends and family members that are employed by the KCPD and KCFD. They whole heartedly agree with me. We the people would recommend making sure these products are 21+ enforced. The only issue is that they are not allowed to make public comments because they represent their employers as a whole and would need permission from their superiors. Even if they were given permission this could negatively affect advancement within their career. Which from a moral and ethical stand point I will not jeopardize their family life. I do however have two uncles that are retired from the KCK police department. These members are more than willing to make a recorded

public statement that align with these views on cannabis. My Uncle Mike retired as a homicide detective and was on the series called "The First 48". When they came to KCK for filming, he fought with his superiors about being put on television because he said it would affect his ability to operate effectively. To his dismay he was showcased anyways because his partner wanted fame and his superiors wanted to showcase the detectives that had an exemplary clearance rate on homicide cases. Even though he was forced he still avoided the cameras as much as possible and downright refused half the time. My Uncle Nick retired as a Senior Master Patrolman and he was trusted so much that in his later days as an officer he was given the responsibility of keeping charge of the evidence room. We (myself and the two retired LEO's) would recommend making sure these products are 21+ enforced.

- Nitrous Oxide (whippets), K2 (actually a synthetic man made substance), bath salts (cocaine/meth), Tianeptine (opioids/benzodiazepines) should also all be banned because they either resemble street drugs or can have life threatening effects or severe effects when misused at high doses.
- Amanita Mushroom products are commonly associated with various spiritual and cultural practices. Due to the political nature of interfering with spiritual and cultural practices I decline to take a stance on this said issue. We the people would recommend making sure these products are 21+ enforced.
- Since this is the public safety committee and this will come down to enforcement through the public safety task force, we must take into account the issue of the workforce and their ability to follow through with such enforcement, due to the lack of staffing that is available when there is much more going on in Kansas City like violence and homicides when people like drug dealers (those who are willing to sell anything to make a profit) are given more power by taking items away from tax paying businesses and giving them back to the streets. I speak specifically on Cannabis when I make this broad reference. Which I can be publicly and credibly supported by retired law enforcement officers.

When it comes to possible solutions, I have taken into account cost and enforcement regarding the personnel capabilities of the public safety task force. The term that is being used lately is "Age-Gating" or also known as age verification. This would be the most appropriate for all cannabis products (hemp derived and so forth) and amanita mushroom products (due to spiritual and cultural concerns). This could be routinely placed on the agenda of the public safety task force for everyone. Then when it comes

to the matter of businesses (acting like a street drug dealer) associated with nuisance activity or repeated disorder incidents. The ban on the products referenced above (7-OH, Kratom, nitrous oxide, K2, bath salts, and tianeptine) would create enforceable "teeth" to deal with these businesses directly. "Age-Gating" products that are already legal and following along with Kansas City's practice of realizing that cannabis enforcement disproportionately negatively affects the common citizen. This would be the best path forward for all parties concerned. Now when it comes to whatever the businesses are doing business as, but basically operating as drug dealers (those who are willing to sell anything to make a profit). Their ability to operate should be dealt with by banning (7-OH, Kratom, nitrous oxide, K2, bath salts, and tianeptine) those substances and following along with the enforcement recommendations stated in Ordinance 251028.

In conclusion, it is essential to consider the implications of this issue seriously, Thank you for your attention to these points.

Regards,

Paul Vega Jr.

"For the People, by the People"

P.S.

I do not find it fair and equitable to the people of Kansas City and as a matter of fact the people of the United States as a whole that multi-state operators and corporations are quietly in the background creating a monopoly on the cannabis industry as a whole.

Also, food for thought, Caffeine, Nicotine, and Alcohol are considered psychoactive substances.