

**From:** [Kelli McCann](#)  
**To:** [Public Testimony](#)  
**Cc:** [Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of Ordinance 251028  
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Dear Members of the Council,

My name is Kelli McCann. I am writing in support of ordinance 251028 that would include prohibiting the sale of kratom in Kansas City.

My son Benjamin Wilcock died from acute mitragynine intoxication (kratom) on 9/12/24 at 40 years of age. Nothing atypical was found in his autopsy. He took kratom to manage his psoriatic arthritis pain. He was led to believe that it was a safe and healthy alternative to prescription drugs and about as addictive as coffee. This belief cost him his life, and it cost me my oldest child and only son.

I have written many letters sharing about my son's death due to kratom. I live in Montana, but I advocate in all states for a kratom ban because this is not just a state-to-state issue but an issue about humanity. Kratom is sold and shipped from all over the country. My son was supplied kratom from an out of state vendor.

I recently spent the day with a journalist who overcame kratom addiction with medical intervention. We visited my son's work to get comments from his employees and to view a wall they made in honor of my son. Ben was a warehouse operations manager for Coca Cola. My son was responsible and hard-working. One of Ben's employees said "We knew Ben took kratom, but we just figured it was for health. He had a "cup of tea" each evening." Kratom is falsely marketed as a safe and natural substance often referred to as "tea." I have connected with many families with similar stories. I will continue to advocate because it is simply the right thing to do. People have died and will continue to die from kratom unless our voices are heard and the appropriate action is taken.

The DEA attempted to schedule this dangerous substance in 2016. It has escalated in the last 10 years as evidenced by more dangerous derivatives being made, more deaths, more addiction, more adverse effects, etc. Death certificates, autopsy, and toxicology reports are concrete data. It is final. So many of us live with that devastating reality because of this dangerous substance every day and are desperately trying to prevent the same fate for others.

The following are links to investigative articles regarding kratom that you may find informative.

[Hundreds died using kratom in Florida. It was touted as safe. | Tampa Bay Times](#)

[Can kratom kill? | Courthouse News Service](#)

[Addiction and the kratom business | Courthouse News Service](#)

[The kratom playbook: Working the refs | Courthouse News Service](#)

[The law and the profits: Inside kratom's political underbelly | Courthouse News Service](#)

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Kelli McCann (Benjamin's mom)

