

**BRENDA M. PUGH, MEMBER**  
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Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP, Secretary  
Pennsylvania Department of Health  
Health & Human Services Building, 8th Floor West  
625 Forster Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Bogen:

I am writing regarding the growing public safety concerns surrounding 7-hydroxymitragynine (7-OH), a highly concentrated compound derived from kratom that is increasingly being marketed and sold throughout Pennsylvania.

I appreciate the recent announcement by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) that it intends to temporarily place 7-hydroxymitragynine into Schedule I of the federal Controlled Substances Act due to the imminent hazard it presents to public safety. While the DEA has not yet finalized that action, its announcement reflects the serious concerns raised by law enforcement, medical professionals, addiction specialists, and public health officials across the country and right here in the 120<sup>th</sup> District.

Over the past several months, I have met with local law enforcement, healthcare professionals, community leaders, addicts and federal officials to discuss the increasing availability of 7-OH products and the significant risks they pose to our communities. These products are often marketed in ways that minimize their potency and potential dangers, particularly to young adults and individuals struggling with substance use disorders.

Considering the DEA's announced intent to temporarily schedule 7-OH, I respectfully request that the Pennsylvania Department of Health begin preparing to take any necessary action under Pennsylvania law so the Commonwealth is positioned to respond promptly should the DEA finalize its temporary Schedule I designation.

My goal is to ensure that, should the DEA finalize its temporary scheduling action, Pennsylvania is prepared to respond without unnecessary delay, so our laws remain consistent and our communities remain protected.

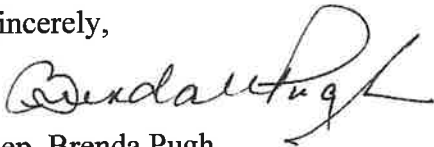
Maintaining consistency between federal and Pennsylvania law is important to provide clarity for law enforcement, prosecutors, healthcare providers, retailers, and the public while ensuring appropriate protections remain in place.

I would also appreciate any information you can provide regarding the Department's anticipated process and timeline for reviewing and implementing any corresponding changes to Pennsylvania's controlled substance schedules following final federal action, and specifically as it relates to the Department's authority to schedule a substance under state law to correspond with a change made at the federal level pursuant to Act 37 of 2016.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or members of your staff to discuss this issue further and to learn how the General Assembly can best support the Department's efforts to protect Pennsylvanians from emerging synthetic and highly concentrated substances such as 7-hydroxymitragynine. I believe that by working together, we can ensure Pennsylvania is prepared to respond quickly and effectively as this issue continues to evolve.

Thank you for your continued commitment to protecting the health and safety of Pennsylvanians. I look forward to working with you and your staff on this important public safety issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda Pugh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "P".

Rep. Brenda Pugh  
State Representative  
120th Legislative District

CC:

Attorney General Dave Sunday  
Secretary of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs -Dr. Latika Davis-Jones  
House of Representatives, Republican Leader Jesse Topper