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TESTIMONY ON HB#1287 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Convertible Pistols

TO: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ HB#/1287, Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Convertible Pistols

This bill, a priority for Everytown for Gun Safety/Moms Demand Action has Maryland joining New York in recognizing the dangers to our communities from “convertible pistols” and taking action to fix the problem.

The irresponsibility of the firearm industry to make products that can easily be made more lethal must be dealt with. As noted, when a bill on this issue was introduced in New York in 2024: ¹

...[hold] the firearm manufacturer Glock accountable for enabling the spread of machine guns in our communities by refusing to redesign its pistols, which are uniquely susceptible to being converted into machine guns using auto sears, commonly known as “Glock switches.” “...[create a] landmark gun industry accountability law to explicitly require firearm manufacturers to take steps to ensure their handguns cannot be easily turned into machine guns with Glock switches.” ... “The Legislature must act decisively to address the vulnerabilities in Glock pistols, safeguarding our communities from the threat posed by illegally modified firearms. These bills will compel Glock to redesign their pistols to prevent such dangerous alterations if Glock wants to continue selling its pistols ... “Fully automatic weapons are prohibited in New York, and there must be no room for circumvention. It is the responsibility of manufacturers to refrain from selling firearms prone to easy modification. The call for accountability is urgent and undeniable.” “This innovative legislation is exactly what our movement has been fighting for — accountability for the industry that disregards public safety to drive up profits and refuses to make changes to keep deadly automatic weapons off the streets of our communities,”

¹ <https://www.everytown.org/press/first-in-the-nation-new-york-lawmakers-introduce-legislation-to-prevent-the-spread-of-dangerous-modified-glock-machine-guns/>

Maryland can join New York in protecting all of us from the merchants of death by prohibiting a person from manufacturing, selling, offering for sale, purchasing, receiving, or transferring a certain convertible pistol. Maryland can and will define a "convertible pistol" as any semiautomatic pistol that can be converted into a machine gun solely by the attachment of a switch/auto-sear.

There is NO valid reason for a person equipped with a semiautomatic pistol to create a weapon of war for a claim of self-protection or to hunt. This is common sense legislation to prevent carnage on our streets and in our communities.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB1287.