



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE CITY

HB1287 Support

March 5th, 2025

The Honorable Luke Clippinger.
Chair, Judiciary Committee
House Office Building
101 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support of HB1287 – “Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Convertible Pistols”

Dear Chair Clippinger, Vice-Chair Bartlett, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express strong support on behalf of the Office of the State’s Attorney for Baltimore City for HB1287. This is a straightforward but essential bill that would directly enhance public safety. This bill would address a gap in existing legislation by prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, receiving, or transfer of a “convertible pistol,” which is a kind of pistol that can be converted from a semi-automatic weapon into a weapon with a very high fire rate up to 1,200 rounds per minute, which is faster than some machine gun. These kinds of weapons must be removed from our streets and from the hands of trigger-pullers, and this legislation is a step in the right direction.

This legislation would allow us to add a misdemeanor charge for the “convertible pistol” in addition to the felony charge and will send a message to trigger-pullers that we are not going to let them off the hook when they endanger the public. It will be an additional layer of accountability that is directly aimed at targeting the perpetrators of the most violent crimes.

In Baltimore City, small plastic pieces as cheap as 25\$, known as “gun switches” or “auto-sears,” are wreaking havoc and have already resulted in several deaths that could have been avoided. “Convertible pistols” are incredibly dangerous because they can make a handgun fully automatic, and they are appearing more frequently on city streets. This legislation gives prosecutors another tool in our toolbox to prosecute offenders who carry these weapons of mass destruction. Guns that have these switches can turn a targeted homicide into a massacre and have even been used to fire at law enforcement. The number of convertible pistols with switches/auto-sears recovered by Baltimore police has practically doubled from 2023 into 2024. This issue is getting worse, so we must act urgently to ensure prosecutors effectively ensure accountability and, thus, promote safer communities.



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I urge you to give a favorable report on HB1287. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Matias C. Cacheiro

Deputy Director of Government Affairs

Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City