

Stephen Johnston

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March 3, 2025

HB 1287
Unfavorable

I am a lifelong Maryland resident who enjoys shooting sports, hunting, fishing, and other outdoor pursuits. I write in opposition to HB 1287, a bill that seems to seek to ban the most popular pistol in the world because it is possible to be illegally modified and converted into a machinegun.

This bill targets Glock designs but also spills over to others

This bill clearly targets Glock branded pistols, one of the most commonly owned pistols in the United States and commonly owned by competition shooters, hunters, police, and firearm enthusiasts alike. This bill aims to ban Glock pistols in Maryland, something no other state has attempted, not even California. What's more is that the wording is vague enough to also cover most, if not all, striker fired pistols on the Maryland handgun roster.

The bill imposes penalties that are redundant under state and federal law

This bill imposes severe penalties for any use of a "convertible" pistol regardless of if it was illegally modified to be a machinegun or not. Thus, if somebody owns a factory fresh Glock pistol (or similar pistol) they would be guilty of violating this law despite the handgun functioning exactly as approved by Maryland State Police when it was put on the handgun roster.

Illegally converting a semi-auto firearm to a machinegun, however, would make a person guilty of violating federal law and therefore subject to heavy penalties under federal law. Federal law makes the mere possession of a Glock Switch, the part that converts an ordinary handgun into a machinegun, a felony subject to 10 years in federal prison and a \$10,000 fine. No way around it, mere possession will land a person in some very serious trouble. Similarly, Maryland has its own, severe, criminal penalties to illegally possessing a machinegun or any part that converts a regular firearm into a machinegun.

In summary, Maryland and the federal government already have the laws on the books to not only deter a person from illegally modifying a firearm to be a machinegun, but also to put people behind bars for a minimum of ten years on possession of an auto-sear or Glock Switch alone.

For the reasons above, I urge an unfavorable report on this bill.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Johnston", with a stylized, cursive script.

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