



TESTIMONY FOR HB1287

Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Convertible Pistols

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Williams

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB1287 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Plainly stated, we abhor the devastation caused by firearms in our society, especially the significant public safety risks posed by convertible pistols. These firearms, which are semiautomatic pistols capable of being easily modified into machine guns with a switch or auto-sear, present an alarming threat to community safety. Their modification drastically increases their rate of fire, creating a heightened risk of gun violence. The bill aims to prevent the circulation of such weapons and mitigate these safety concerns.

HB1287 prohibits the manufacture, sale, purchase, receipt, or transfer of convertible pistols in Maryland. It explicitly defines convertible pistols as those that can be transformed into machine guns simply by attaching a switch or auto-sear. By closing existing loopholes, this bill establishes clear legal boundaries to curb the proliferation of these modified firearms. Existing firearm penalties would now be applied to the possession of a convertible pistol.

For Marylanders, the benefits of HB1287 are crucial. It enhances public safety by reducing access to high-capacity weapons that are easily converted for dangerous purposes. Strengthening firearm regulations allows the state to remain proactive in addressing emerging threats posed by convertible pistols. Ultimately, this legislation creates safer communities and protects residents from the dangers associated with these firearms.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition wholeheartedly supports this bill and recommends a FAVORABLE report in committee.