

Date: March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

To: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett, and Judiciary Committee Member

Reference: House Bill 1287: Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Convertible Pistols

Position: FAVORABLE

Honorable Judiciary Committee Members,

On behalf of LifeBridge Health's Center for Hope we submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill-1287, which prohibits the sale and transfer of certain convertible pistols. Defined as, prohibiting a person from manufacturing, selling, offering for sale, purchasing, receiving, or transferring a certain convertible pistol; and defining "convertible pistol" as any semi-automatic pistol that can be converted into a machine gun solely by the attachment of a switch or auto sear. Convertible pistols are semiautomatic pistols transformed into machine guns by attachment of an auto sear or - as Glock firearms being the most well-known gun recovered via Baltimore police - "Glock Switches." Glock switches have become increasingly prevalent on Baltimore's streets tied to many mass shootings and drug trafficking cases.

HB1287 addresses convertible firearms once and for all, as current law states a person may not manufacture, possess, sell, offer to sell, transfer, purchase, or receive rapid-fire trigger activators, being specific to the attachment auto sear piece itself. As the rapid-fire trigger activator auto sear and Glock switch are made illegal under Md 4-305.1, possession charges in result of up to ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine; HB1287 makes illegal the possession of convertible pistols.

This bill would significantly expand current law by making illegal the buying and transferring of guns capable of being altered to allow an auto sear to be installed. This would require a change in design, and if enacted, would force sellers to not manufacture or sell a gun that can be converted, requiring redesign for the Maryland market, and in effect taking them off the market. HB1287 would eliminate a means of mass gun violence, slowing down the pulling of a trigger by whomever uses guns in violent crimes in Maryland. On average, 682 people die by guns each year in Maryland (Everytown stat). Maryland has the 35th-highest rate of gun deaths in the United States, with 59% of these deaths being homicides. Gun related homicides are the leading cause of death for kids and teens. As of 2022, firearms are now the leading cause of death among children and teens (ages 1-17), surpassing car crashes, overdoses, and cancers – we must act now to protect children BEFORE the violence occurs. In 2022, there were over 48,000 firearm-related deaths in the United States, with an average of 132 people dying from firearm-related injuries each day. This bill corresponds with community violence prevention initiatives, protecting members who are at higher risk of becoming victims of gun violence.

In conclusion, House Bill 1287 represents a critical step forward in our efforts to reduce gun violence and enhance public safety in Maryland, so we are not condemned to live in a society where every shooting is a

mass shooting. Our hospitals, schools, places of worship, political rallies, concerts, and other gatherings need to be protected from gun violence. When an already dangerous semi-automatic weapon is turned into a fully automatic weapon, the weapon becomes even more lethal and can result in catastrophic results - especially to innocent bystanders and law enforcement.

For the foregoing reasons, LifeBridge Health's Center for Hope urges a favorable report on House Bill 1287.

For more information, please contact:

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