



LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

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Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers its strong and favorable support for House Bill 577/Senate Bill 334 - Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Machine Gun Convertible Pistols. This legislation represents an important step toward strengthening public safety, reducing gun violence, and addressing emerging threats posed by firearms that can be illegally converted into machine guns through readily available devices.

HB 577/SB 334 addresses a growing public safety concern involving semiautomatic pistols that can be modified to fire automatically through illegal conversion devices commonly known as “switches” or auto sears. These modifications allow firearms to discharge multiple rounds in seconds, dramatically increasing the likelihood of mass casualties and placing communities, law enforcement officers, and bystanders at heightened risk. By prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, and transfer of machine gun convertible pistols, the bill seeks to prevent dangerous weapons from entering circulation and being used in violent crimes.

This legislation is particularly significant for communities that are disproportionately impacted by firearm violence, including many Black neighborhoods across Maryland. Gun violence continues to devastate families, destabilize communities, and undermine economic and social progress. **HB 577/SB 334** reflects a proactive approach to prevention by targeting the mechanisms that make firearms more lethal before harm occurs, rather than relying solely on reactive enforcement after violence has already taken place.

HB 577/SB 334 supports law enforcement and public safety efforts by clarifying standards around firearm-related offenses and closing regulatory gaps that have allowed dangerous modifications to proliferate. Preventing access to machine gun convertible firearms aligns with broader violence prevention strategies that emphasize harm reduction, accountability, and community safety.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland urges favorable consideration of **HB 577/SB 334**.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland