

HB 577

Favorable

TO: Chair Bartlett, **Vice Chair** Davis, Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Daniel Webster, ScD, MPH

Professor and Distinguished Scholar, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions

DATE: February 9, 2026

RE:

HB 577- Criminal Law-Firearm Crimes-Machine Gun Convertible Pistols

I am a tenured professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Distinguished Scholar with the Center for Gun Violence Solutions. I am writing to you in my individual capacity with over 30 years of experience leading research on violence and its prevention. The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect the policies or positions of Johns Hopkins University.

Federal law largely restricts civilian access to machine guns due to significant public safety concerns. They spray dozens of rounds in seconds and greatly increase injuries and deaths from shootings, putting bystanders at risk. Studies of firearms' capacity to rapidly fire many rounds increases the number of persons wounded or killed in a shooting. A shooters' accuracy becomes less significant when they are spraying bullets in automatic mode and putting bystanders as well as intended targets at increased risk of injury and death.

Given the lethality of these easily obtained devices and the threat to public safety, I support the favorable passage of HB 577.

Sincere Regards,



Daniel Webster, ScD, MPH