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The Honorable Sandy J. Bartlett
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Good Afternoon, Chair Bartlett, Vice-Chair Davis, and the members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am Tara Jackson, State's Attorney for Prince George's County, and I am submitting this testimony in support of House Bill 577, also known as **Criminal Law – Firearm Crimes – Machine Gun Convertible Pistols**.

House Bill 577 would prohibit a person from manufacturing, selling, offering for sale, purchasing, receiving, or transferring in Maryland a certain class of firearm known as a convertible pistol—defined as any semi-automatic pistol that can be converted into a machine gun solely by attaching a switch or similar device.

This legislation addresses a growing and unique threat to public safety in our state. Certain pistol designs—including, but not limited to, those produced by Glock and other manufacturers—are engineered in a way that allows users to convert them into fully automatic weapons using inexpensive parts such as an “auto-sear” or Glock switch. While both federal and Maryland law already make automatic weapons illegal for most individuals to possess or manufacture, these conversion devices can be illegally purchased or even 3D-printed at home, effectively creating machine guns with readily available tools. This dangerously lowers the barrier for criminals to obtain weapons capable of firing dozens of rounds per second with minimal effort.

The threat posed by easily converted automatic weapons cannot be overstated. These modifications can transform a common semi-automatic pistol into a weapon capable of discharging up to 1,200 rounds per minute, far beyond what a shooter could achieve without the illegal device.

House Bill 577 would close a dangerous loophole by preventing the sale and transfer of firearms that are uniquely susceptible to such conversions, thereby reducing the availability of functionally automatic weapons on Maryland's streets. This legislation is a proactive step toward holding firearm manufacturers accountable for design features that facilitate illegal modification, limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the wrong hands, and enhancing community safety.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge this committee to give House Bill 577 a favorable report.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tara H. Jackson".

Tara H. Jackson
State's Attorney