

ZEKE COHEN
Council President



100 Holiday Street, Suite 400
Baltimore, Maryland 21202
410-396-4804 • Fax 410-539-0647
council.president@baltimorecity.gov

BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202

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Honorable Chair Bartlett and members of the House Judiciary committee,

I write to you in support of House Bill 577, Criminal Law - Firearm Crimes - Machine Gun Convertible Pistols. By codifying responsible pistol design standards in law, this bill will help reduce the flow of pistols into Maryland--pistols which are easily converted into illegal machine guns through the use of “switches”.

Baltimore City has seen an influx of these illegally converted machine guns in recent years; the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) reported that recoveries nearly doubled between 2024 and 2025. Guns modified with switches have been recovered in the possession of teenagers and in connection with drug trafficking. These firearms are both extremely dangerous and concealable, posing a major threat to our communities and law enforcement.

We have made historic progress in reducing gun homicides in Baltimore City through an all-of-the-above strategy involving a combination of trauma-informed care, credible messengers, community policing, and common-sense gun laws. However, we must continue to stay ahead of the curve, address root causes of gun violence, and prevent deadly weapons like homemade machine guns from spreading in our communities.

By reducing the wide availability of easily convertible firearms, this bill takes a smart step towards making Baltimore and all of Maryland safer. For all these reasons, **I urge the committee to vote favorably on this bill.** Please contact my office with any further questions.

CC: Shamoyia Gardiner, Deputy Chief of Staff and Legislative Director