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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 5043**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING CONVERTIBLE PISTOLS AND UNFINISHED FRAMES OR UNFINISHED LOWER RECEIVERS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill generally makes it a class D felony for anyone or any legal entity (firm, partnership, corporation, limited liability company, association, or other similar entity) to import into Connecticut or advertise, sell, offer, or expose for sale any convertible pistol manufactured on or after October 1, 2026. A class D felony is punishable by up to five years in prison, a fine up to \$5,000, or both. The bill does not apply this provision to retail sale or other lawful transfer of a convertible pistol by someone who is not a licensed gun dealer to another person who is not a licensed gun dealer.

Under the bill, a “convertible pistol” is any semiautomatic pistol with a cruciform trigger bar (see below) that can be readily altered by hand or with a common household tool (screwdriver, wrench, hacksaw, crowbar, electric drill, rotary tool, hammer, chisel or file, or pliers) so that the pistol can be readily converted into a machine gun by installing or attaching a pistol converter.

The bill also expressly states that any convertible pistol that is equipped with a pistol converter is considered a machine gun. Under the bill, a “pistol converter” is any device or instrument that, when installed in or attached to the rear of the slide of a semiautomatic pistol, interferes with the trigger mechanism, and in so doing enables the pistol to discharge a number of shots or bullets rapidly or automatically with one continuous pull of the trigger.

It also explicitly states that for purpose of the penal code in general, “machine gun” includes any convertible pistol that is possessed by an individual who also possesses a pistol converter.

Existing law generally prohibits buying or selling rate of fire enhancements (such as bump stocks). The bill expands current law's definition of "rate of fire enhancement" to include a pistol converter or any other device, part, combination of parts, kit, tool, or accessory that is not necessary for the function of the pistol and that, when built into, installed in, or attached to the pistol, increases the rate of fire above the rate at which a person can otherwise fire the firearm. In doing so, it generally makes it a class D felony to sell, offer to sell, otherwise transfer or offer to transfer, purchase, possess, use, or manufacture them, as is the case for other "rate of fire enhancements" under existing law.

Existing law generally prohibits buying or selling an "unfinished frame or lower receiver" and sets other related restrictions. The bill redefines this term ("unfinished frame or unfinished lower receiver" under the bill) to mean a blank, casting, forging, printing, extrusion, machined body, or similar item that (1) has reached a stage in manufacture where it may readily be completed into the frame or receiver of a functional firearm; or (2) is marketed or sold to the public to become or be used as the frame or receiver of a functional firearm once completed. It also prohibits anyone without a local dealer permit from advertising, selling, or delivering these; offering or exposing them for sale or delivery; or possessing them with the intent to sell them at retail or deliver them.

Lastly, it makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

## **DEFINITIONS**

### ***For Laws Specific to Offenses Against Public Peace and Safety***

***Machine Gun.*** The bill expressly states that any convertible pistol that is equipped with a pistol converter is a machine gun. Under existing law, a "machine gun" is (1) any weapon, loaded or unloaded, that shoots, is designed to shoot, or can be readily restored to shoot automatically more than one projectile, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger, and (2) any part or combination of parts designed to convert a weapon into a machine gun and any combination

of parts from which a machine gun can be assembled if a person possessed or controlled these parts.

**Convertible Pistol.** The bill specifies that “convertible pistol” does not include (1) any hammer-fired semiautomatic pistol or (2) a pistol with a tab or other piece of material that shields the cruciform trigger bar from interference by a pistol converter so that the pistol can be readily converted into a machine gun by installing or attaching a pistol converter.

**Cruciform Trigger Bar.** Under the bill, a “cruciform trigger bar” is a component in a semiautomatic pistol that serves as a linkage between the trigger and firing pin and has its sear incorporated in a cross-shaped surface.

#### **RATE OF FIRE ENHANCEMENT**

The law generally makes it a class D felony for anyone, except a federally licensed firearms manufacturer fulfilling a military contract, to sell, offer to sell, otherwise transfer or offer to transfer, purchase, possess, use, or manufacture a “rate of fire enhancement” (such as a bump stock). The bill expands “rate of fire enhancement” to include a pistol converter or any other device, part, combination of parts, kit, tool, or accessory that is not necessary for the function of the pistol and that, when built into, installed in, or attached to the pistol, increases the rate of fire above the rate at which a person can otherwise fire the firearm. In doing so it subjects anyone who sells, offers to sell, otherwise transfers or offers to transfer, purchases, possesses, uses, or manufactures them to the penalties described above.

#### **UNFINISHED FRAME OR UNFINISHED LOWER RECEIVER**

Under current law, “unfinished frame or lower receiver” means a blank, casting, or machined body intended to be turned into the frame or lower receiver of a firearm, with additional machining, and which has been formed or machined to the point where most major machining operations have been completed to turn the blank, casting, or machined body into a frame or lower receiver of a firearm, even if the fire-control cavity area of the blank, casting, or machined body is still completely

solid and unmachined. Current law also specifies that an “unfinished frame or lower receiver” is not a firearm as defined under federal law.

The bill clarifies that “unfinished frame or lower receiver” refers to an “unfinished frame or unfinished lower receiver” and makes corresponding changes throughout. It also redefines the term to mean a blank, casting, forging, printing, extrusion, machined body, or similar item that (1) has reached a stage in manufacture where it may readily be completed into the frame or receiver of a functional firearm; or (2) is marketed or sold to the public as the frame or receiver of a functional firearm once completed. The bill maintains existing law’s general prohibition on purchasing, receiving, selling, delivering, or otherwise transferring them; procedural requirements for doing so if allowed; requirements for unique serial numbers or other identification marks; and penalties for violations.

The bill prohibits individuals or legal entities from advertising, selling, delivering, or offering or exposing for sale or delivery, or possessing with the intent to sell at retail or deliver, any unfinished frame or unfinished lower receiver in Connecticut without a local dealer permit. By law, anyone with a valid permit for the sale at retail of pistols or revolvers issued on or before September 30, 2023, holds a valid permit for the sale at retail of pistols or revolvers until it expires or is revoked, suspended, confiscated, or surrendered. The permit holder may then renew the permit as a permit for the sale at retail of firearms.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 12 (03/24/2026)