



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Attorney General Frosh Files Suit to Prevent Distribution of Files for 3-D Printed Firearms**

**BALTIMORE, MD (July 30, 2018)** – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh will join a multistate lawsuit to block a Trump Administration action that gives criminals and terrorists access to downloadable, untraceable and undetectable 3D-printed weapons. In an abrupt reversal, the federal government settled the case against Defense Distributed on June 29, 2018, an organization dedicated to global distribution of open-source, downloadable 3D-printed guns. As part of the settlement, the Trump Administration will allow the downloadable guns for unlimited public distribution in any form.

“Through this settlement, our federal government is allowing anyone armed with a computer and a printer to make and distribute guns, jeopardizing the safety of all Americans” said Attorney General Frosh. “This action demonstrates reckless disregard for public safety and national security.”

The suit argues the Trump Administration actions resulting from the settlement violate the Administrative Procedure Act and the Tenth Amendment. The suit also asks the court for a nationwide temporary restraining order, both to bar the federal government from lifting export controls for these tutorials, and to prevent Defense Distributed from posting the downloadable guns online. This lawsuit is being filed in federal court in Seattle. In addition to Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Oregon, New York, Washington, and the District of Columbia joined the suit.

Downloadable guns, in the form of Computer Aided Design (CAD) files for the automated production of firearms using a 3-D printer, are functional weapons that are often unrecognizable by standard metal detectors and untraceable because they contain no serial numbers. Anyone with access to the CAD files and a commercially available 3-D printer could readily manufacture, possess, or sell such a weapon—regardless of their age, mental health status, or criminal history. Additionally, unrestricted access to this kind of information will increase illegal trafficking of weapons across state and national borders.

Attorney General Frosh today also signed a letter from a coalition of attorneys general to Attorney General Sessions and Secretary Pompeo, expressing serious concern over the federal government’s recent settlement with Defense Distributed and urging them to withdraw from the settlement.

The attorneys general argue that these actions will facilitate violations of state and federal law and create unprecedented risks to public safety, allowing terrorists, transnational criminals, convicted felons, and individuals otherwise prohibited by federal and state laws from purchasing, manufacturing, selling, and possessing firearms to have unrestricted access to computer designs for unsafe, undetectable and untraceable firearms.

In the letter, the attorneys general also express their serious concern over the Department of State’s abrupt change in position on these matters, pointing to arguments the Department of Justice and Department of

State have made for years in the challenge brought by Defense Distributed. Until very recently, the Department of State had argued that the federal government has a strong national security interest in the regulation of these types of files. The attorneys general also note that courts have previously recognized the risk of allowing these gun designs to be publicly available on the Internet, and urge the Administration not to disregard those rulings.

The Arms Export Control Act requires the federal government to reduce the international trade of firearms abroad, which the federal government has successfully done through the International Traffic in Arms Regulations, in part by prohibiting certain technical data about weapons from being made publicly available. Many states also have independent laws and regulations to prevent gun violence and protect public safety.