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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Correction Notice: Please disregard the version of this release issued at 10:30 a.m. today. This corrected release includes a link to the updated complaint now filed with the Court.

Specifically, the corrected complaint revises Paragraph 57 of the complaint with the following:

The original version read: *“Just a few months ago, a mass shooting took place in Maryland, killing one person and injuring nine others. The perpetrator was found with a Glock switch, an MCD that converts semiautomatic firearms into automatic firearms, and an AK-47.”*

The updated version now reads: *“In another recent incident in Maryland, an MCD-equipped firearm was recovered (along with an AK-47) after a mass shooting that left one person dead and nine injured in Baltimore County.”*

No other changes have been made to the press release or the complaint which can be found here:

[https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/News%20Documents/060925_NJ_v_Bondi%20\(FRTs\)_corrected.pdf](https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/News%20Documents/060925_NJ_v_Bondi%20(FRTs)_corrected.pdf)

Attorney General Brown Sues Trump Administration to Prevent Efforts to Distribute Thousands of Machine Gun Devices Across Country

Lawsuit Targets ATF over Illegal Actions Involving Forced Reset Triggers

BALTIMORE, MD (June 9, 2025) – Attorney General Anthony G. Brown today joined a coalition of 16 Attorneys General in [suing](#) the Trump administration, and, in particular, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), over its official plans to distribute thousands of machinegun conversion devices (MCD) to communities across the United States.

ATF’s action involves Forced Reset Triggers (FRTs), which allow even novice shooters to achieve the firepower of a military machinegun. Although ATF previously classified FRTs as machineguns, ATF - under directive from Trump administration leadership - signed a settlement agreement that promises to stop enforcing federal law against FRTs and that promises to redistribute thousands of FRTs the ATF had previously seized. The multistate litigation seeks to prevent that imminent redistribution, because FRTs are illegal to possess under federal law.

“Forced reset triggers turn semi-automatic firearms into weapons of war capable of inflicting devastating impacts on Maryland communities,” **said Attorney General Brown.** “The Trump administration’s decision to send these previously seized firearms back to Maryland, where they are illegal, makes our

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neighbors and children more vulnerable to mass shootings. We cannot stand by while the federal government violates its own laws and fuels the gun violence epidemic that has already claimed too many lives.”

The federal government’s plan to return thousands of Forced Reset Triggers (FRTs) will have severe consequences for Maryland. FRTs are illegal under Maryland law and enable shooters to unleash military-style firepower that dramatically increases injury and fatality rates. Their distribution will lead to increased criminal use, greater public safety risks, and higher law enforcement costs.

Maryland will also face a growing healthcare burden: firearm-related injuries already cost the state over \$60 million annually, and weapons with an accelerated rate of fire cause more severe injuries, more victims per incident, and long-term trauma for survivors and families. The influx of illegal FRTs into Maryland communities will strain hospitals, traumatize neighborhoods, and force the state to divert more public resources toward law enforcement, training, and emergency preparedness.

In recent years, machinegun conversion devices like FRTs, which dramatically increase a firearm’s rate of fire, have been frequently used in violent crimes and mass shootings, worsening the gun violence epidemic in the United States. Firearms equipped with MCDs are able to exceed the rate of fire of many military machine guns, firing up to 20 bullets in one second. ATF has noted a significant rise in the use of MCDs, leading to increasing incidents of machine-gun fire – up 1,400% from 2019 through 2021.

Since at least 1975, ATF has classified devices that operate similarly to FRTs as machineguns prohibited by federal law. FRT devices replace the standard trigger on a semiautomatic firearm to allow the shooter to maintain continuous fire with one trigger pull, similar to the operation of fully automatic weapons. Despite the prohibition, in recent years, ATF estimates that at least 100,000 FRTs have been distributed across the country. ATF’s records also establish that machinegun conversion devices, including FRTs, are showing up more often at crime scenes.

Multiple lawsuits seeking either to enforce or challenge the prohibition on FRTs were filed during the Biden administration. A federal judge in New York agreed that FRTs are banned under federal law. A federal judge in Texas disagreed and held that FRTs do not qualify as machineguns under federal law, but that ruling was on appeal.

On May 16, 2025, the Trump administration announced that it has now settled these lawsuits - and done so in a way that eviscerates the federal FRT prohibition. ATF has agreed to abandon its enforcement actions and appeals; promised to stop enforcing the federal ban on machineguns against FRTs, even against individuals and sellers who were not parties to any of these lawsuits; and pledged to redistribute FRTs that it previously seized.

Today’s lawsuit seeks to prevent the redistribution of FRTs because they are prohibited by U.S. law, which prohibits anyone from owning machineguns, including devices that convert firearms into automatic weapons. The lawsuit explains that the federal government cannot violate U.S. law, even when it tries to bury those violations in a settlement agreement. The coalition will seek a preliminary injunction to halt the Trump administration from distributing FRT devices in ways that directly harm Plaintiff States in contravention of federal law.

The lawsuit explains that the redistribution of machinegun conversion devices will permanently threaten public safety nationwide. And as the lawsuit highlights, ATF has even admitted that returning FRTs in states that prohibit them would “aid and abet” violations of state laws. The Attorneys General seek to prevent those harms from occurring.

Attorney General Brown is joined by the attorneys general of New Jersey, Delaware, Colorado, Hawai’i, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington, and the District of Columbia in filing this litigation.

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