

# Attorney General Platkin Sues Glock for Design and Sale of Guns Switchable to Machine Gun Configuration

*Glock Has Refused to Change Its Handgun Design to Prevent Civilians from Using Them as Machine Guns, Lawsuit Alleges*

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[Office of The Attorney General](#)

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[Statewide Affirmative Firearms Enforcement Office](#)

– Ravi Ramanathan, *Director*

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**TRENTON** – Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin today announced a lawsuit against Glock, Inc. and Glock Ges.m.b.H. (together, “Glock”) seeking relief for multiple violations of the State’s firearms industry public safety law through the knowing manufacture, sale, and distribution of its namesake pistols, which can easily be configured to fire automatically as illegal machine guns, using an inexpensive device commonly known as a “Glock switch.”

The lawsuit, filed in the New Jersey Superior Court’s Chancery Division, demands that Glock suspend sales of the switchable guns to the civilian market through Glock’s network of New Jersey dealers, and seeks restitution for the public harm Glock has caused through its unreasonable, unlawful, and dangerous commercial practices. Glock has long known that its handguns are easily, and frequently, switched from semi-automatic operation to an automatic firing mode through the attachment of a cheap, small, external add-on component that resembles a Lego brick and is commonly known as a “Glock switch.”

The ability to easily function as either a semi-automatic weapon or a machine gun is built into Glock’s design. A Glock switch can be purchased for

under \$20 or created on a 3-D printer and fitted into the backplate of a Glock handgun in minutes. Glock switches allow pistols to fire up to 1,200 rounds per minute — a rate as fast as or faster than many fully automatic firearms and machine guns used by the United States military — with a single trigger pull. Glock directly benefits from increased sales because the ease with which its weapons may be easily switched to machine gun mode in a matter of minutes makes them more attractive to certain buyers, particularly those who intend to use the machine guns for criminal activities.

New Jersey has some of the strongest gun laws in the country, including the firearms industry public safety law that Governor Phil Murphy signed into law in 2022. The State has had longstanding strict restrictions on the possession, manufacture, or sale of machine guns, or any instrument or device adaptable for use as a machine gun. When switched to machine gun configuration by a Glock switch, Glock handguns are illegal, handheld machine guns.

“With this lawsuit, we are putting the homemade machine gun industry out of business. For decades, Glock has knowingly sold weapons that anyone with a screwdriver and a YouTube video can convert into a military-grade machine gun in a matter of minutes,” **said Attorney General Platkin.** “Glock’s ownership sits in Austria lining their pockets with profits paid for by American bloodshed fueled by their products — and we are sick of it. Our message today to Glock is clear: the days of putting greed ahead of the safety of our residents and law enforcement officers are over.”

The filing comes on the same day that New Jersey announced the formation of a multistate coalition to hold irresponsible firearms industry members accountable for their devastating impact on gun violence. As part of that effort, Minnesota also filed suit against Glock today.

“I am suing Glock for knowingly manufacturing and selling handguns that can easily be converted into machine guns,” **said Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison.** “Glock’s actions, and their inaction, violate Minnesota law, and put kids, communities, and law enforcement in danger. This has to stop. Today’s lawsuit against Glock is about protecting our kids and protecting the guardians who look out for us. Attorney General Platkin and the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General are great partners in this effort and I thank Attorney General Platkin for his strong leadership in keeping the residents of our states safe.”

“Glock knows that its guns are commonly switched to machine guns and routinely used to perpetrate violent crime, but has done nothing meaningful to stop it,” **said Ravi Ramanathan, Director of the Statewide Affirmative Firearms Enforcement Office (SAFE)**. “Just like for any other product, in any other industry, the manufacturer of a product that could be so easily, illegally, and dangerously altered is legally required to modify its design to keep the public safe. Sales of the dangerous product would stop. The gun industry should not be treated differently than any other industry. That is what we are demanding today.”

The complaint details how Glock designs, manufactures, and distributes handguns that it knows are intrinsically easy to switch into a handheld machine gun configuration that wreaks havoc throughout New Jersey. The company’s switchable handguns are widely available and accessible to the general public throughout Glock’s network of authorized retail shops across New Jersey. The complaint further alleges that Glock has known about the switchability of its handguns since the 1980s, when Glock’s founder, Gaston Glock, showed his own early prototype of a Glock switch in 1988 to an inventor who had also created a switch enabling machine gun fire.

Switched machine guns are a scourge on the nation’s streets. The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”) reports that more than 5,400 machine-gun conversion parts were seized between 2017 to 2021 — a 570% increase from the prior five-year period.

In New Jersey, Glock handguns are an increasingly popular [crime gun](#), with annual recoveries of Glock handguns having increased by 104% from 2020 to 2023.

Law enforcement officials are finding switched Glock machine guns with increasing frequency when apprehending suspects in home invasions, burglaries, narcotics sales, weapons trafficking incidents, fatal shootings and attempted shootings. The proliferation of these handheld machine guns dramatically increases risks, not only to innocent bystanders, but to law enforcement and other first responders. Minors are often the victims of switched Glock machine guns, and sometimes possess them.

Glock switches not only enable Glock handguns to shoot at speeds exceeding military-use automatic weapons, but also make those handguns less accurate. The immense recoil caused by machine gun fire coming out of a

small handgun inevitably results in an uncontrollable spray of bullets, further increasing the danger to bystanders and the public.

The lawsuit alleges that Glock knows its handgun's design intrinsically makes it easy to switch into a machine gun. For example:

- Glock switch manufacturers often print the Glock logo on their switches, often leading customers to believe that they are Glock products and mail them to Glock for repair. That logo has been Glock's registered trademark since 1986, but Glock has taken no steps to dissociate itself from the switches bearing its brand.
- Glock has been contacted by news outlets regarding whether the company will update its design to prevent guns from being switched to handheld machine guns. Glock has either remained silent or sought to cast blame elsewhere.
- Glock has been asked by the ATF to modify its designs to make it more difficult to attach Glock switches. Glock responded that it could not, and would not, do so.

Glock profits from the fact that its guns are so easily switched, as the switched guns appeal to criminals and gangs. By choosing to continue designing, manufacturing, and — via New Jersey distributors — distributing switchable guns, and by doing so without making reasonable efforts to prevent the prevalent machine gun switching, Glock has contributed to a public nuisance in New Jersey, harming the State and its residents, and has further violated the New Jersey Product Liability Act. The State's lawsuit seeks a court order requiring Glock to end the sale and distribution of switchable handguns to New Jersey civilian residents.

Earlier this year, [Attorney General Platkin](#) led a multistate coalition telling Glock to retain evidence related to a similar lawsuit filed by Chicago.

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To watch a demonstration of a switched Glock handgun, click here: <https://youtu.be/Sofvxw-rdYQ>

The Attorney General and SAFE are represented by Ken Taber, Christopher C. Caffarone, Michael Borofsky, Thomas L. Howard III, Nicole Steinberg, and

Lindsey Mitchell of Special Counsel Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, as well as Assistant Attorney General David Leit, Deputy Attorneys General Jonathan Mangel, Giancarlo Piccinini, and Loren Miller, and Honors Law Clerk Andrea Cavazos, from the Division of Law's Special Litigation Section.

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[SAFE](#) is a first-in-the-nation office focused on firearms industry accountability. The [SAFE Office](#) was established by Attorney General Platkin in 2022 to exercise the Attorney General's authority under the gun industry public safety legislation, P.L. 2022, c. 56, and to facilitate the efficient and effective administration of laws pertaining to gun violence.



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