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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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A N A C T

RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- WEAPONS

Introduced By: Senators de la Cruz, Rogers, Paolino, Ciccone, and F Lombardi

Date Introduced: March 01, 2022

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Sections 11-47-2, 11-47-8 and 11-47-42 of the General Laws in Chapter 11-  
2 47 entitled "Weapons" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **11-47-2. Definitions.**

4           When used in this chapter, the following words and phrases are construed as follows:

5           (1) "3D printing process" means 3D printing or additive manufacturing which is a process  
6 of making three (3) dimensional solid objects from a computer file and shall include any of various  
7 processes in which material is joined or solidified under computer control to create a three (3)  
8 dimensional object, with material being added together including liquid molecules, or powder  
9 grains.

10           (2) "Antique firearm" is defined as that term is defined under the provisions of 18 U.S.C.  
11 § 921.

12           (3) "Binary trigger" means a device that replaces a standard trigger on a semi-automatic  
13 weapon and is designed to fire one round on the pull of the trigger and another round upon release  
14 of the trigger.

15           (4) "Bump-fire stock" means any device that replaces a semi-automatic weapon's standard  
16 stock and is designed to slide back and forth rapidly, harnessing the weapon's recoil to rapidly fire  
17 the weapon.

18           (5) "Crime of violence" means and includes any of the following crimes or an attempt to  
19 commit any of them: murder, manslaughter, rape, first- or second-degree sexual assault, first- or

1 second-degree child molestation, kidnapping, first- and second-degree arson, mayhem, robbery,  
2 burglary, breaking and entering, any felony violation involving the illegal manufacture, sale, or  
3 delivery of a controlled substance, or possession with intent to manufacture, sell, or deliver a  
4 controlled substance classified in schedule I or schedule II of § 21-28-2.08, any violation of § 21-  
5 28-4.01.1 or § 21-28-4.01.2 or conspiracy to commit any violation of these statutes, assault with a  
6 dangerous weapon, assault or battery involving grave bodily injury, or assault with intent to commit  
7 any offense punishable as a felony; upon any conviction of an offense punishable as a felony  
8 offense under § 12-29-5.

9 (6) "Firearm" includes any machine gun, pistol, rifle, air rifle, air pistol, "blank gun," "BB  
10 gun," or other instrument from which steel or metal projectiles are propelled, or that may readily  
11 be converted to expel a projectile, except [taser](#), crossbows, recurve, compound, or longbows, and  
12 except instruments propelling projectiles that are designed or normally used for a primary purpose  
13 other than as a weapon. The frame or receiver of the weapon shall be construed as a firearm under  
14 the provisions of this section.

15 (7) "Fugitive from justice" means any person who has fled from any state, territory, the  
16 District of Columbia, or possession of the United States to avoid prosecution for a crime of violence  
17 or to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceeding.

18 (8) "Ghost gun" means a firearm, including a frame or receiver, that lacks a unique serial  
19 number engraved or cased in metal alloy on the frame or receiver by a licensed manufacturer,  
20 maker, or importer under federal law or markings in accordance with 27 C.F.R. § 479.102. It does  
21 not include a firearm that has been rendered permanently inoperable, or a firearm that is not  
22 required to have a serial number in accordance with the federal Gun Control Act of 1968.

23 (9) "Licensing authorities" means the board of police commissioners of a city or town  
24 where the board has been instituted, the chief of police or superintendent of police of other cities  
25 and towns having a regular organized police force, and, in towns where there is no chief of police  
26 or superintendent of police, it means the town clerk who may issue licenses upon the  
27 recommendation of the town sergeant, and it also means any other person or body duly authorized  
28 by the city or town charter or by state law.

29 (10) "Machine gun" means any weapon that shoots, is designed to shoot, or can be readily  
30 restored to shoot automatically more than one shot, without manual reloading, by a single function  
31 of the trigger. The term also includes the frame or receiver of the weapon, any combination of parts  
32 designed and intended for use in converting a weapon into a machine gun, and any combination of  
33 parts from which a machine gun can be assembled if the parts are in the possession or under the  
34 control of a person.

1 (11) "Major component" means, with respect to a firearm:

2 (i) The slide or cylinder or the frame or receiver of the firearm; and

3 (ii) In the case of a rifle or shotgun, includes the barrel of the firearm.

4 (12) "Person" includes an individual, partnership, firm, association, or corporation.

5 (13) "Pistol" includes any pistol or revolver, and any shotgun, rifle, or similar weapon with  
6 overall length less than twenty-six inches (26"), but does not include any pistol or revolver designed  
7 for the use of blank cartridges only.

8 (14) "Sawed-off rifle" means any rifle with overall length of less than twenty-six inches  
9 (26") or barrel length of less than sixteen inches (16").

10 (15) "Sawed-off shotgun" means any shotgun with overall length of less than twenty-six  
11 inches (26") or barrel length of less than eighteen inches (18").

12 (16) "Sell" includes let or hire, give, lend, and transfer, and "purchase" includes hire,  
13 accept, and borrow, and "purchasing" shall be construed accordingly.

14 (17) "Stun gun" means a battery powered handheld device that transmits an electric charge  
15 from the device to a person, while touching or applying the device to a person, and is activated by  
16 a trigger or button.

17 (18) "Taser" means a battery powered handheld device that transmits an electrical charge  
18 from the device to a person, by means of expelling a projectile, darts or other device attached to  
19 electric wires which strike or attach to a person, and is activated by a trigger or button.

20 ~~(17)~~(19) "Trigger crank" means a trigger actuator that attaches to the trigger of a semi-  
21 automatic weapon and causes the weapon to fire by turning the crank handle.

22 ~~(18)~~(20) "Undetectable firearm" means any firearm that:

23 (i) After removal of all parts, other than a major component, is not as detectable by walk-  
24 through metal detectors commonly used at airports or other public buildings; or

25 (ii) Any major component of which, if subjected to inspection by the types of detection  
26 devices commonly used at airports or other public buildings for security screening, would not  
27 generate an image that accurately depicts the shape of the component; or

28 (iii) Is manufactured wholly of plastic, fiberglass, or through a 3D printing process; or

29 (iv) Upon which the frame or receiver lacks a unique serial number engraved or cased into  
30 on the frame or receiver by a licensed manufacturer, maker, or importer under federal law, or  
31 markings in accordance with 27 C.F.R. § 479.102. Provided, however, this subsection shall not  
32 apply to any firearm rendered permanently inoperable or a firearm manufactured prior to 1968.

33 ~~11-47-8. License or permit required for carrying pistol -- Other weapons prohibited~~  
34 License or permit required for carrying pistol, stun gun or taser -- Possession of machine gun.

1 (a) No person shall, without a license or permit issued as provided in §§ 11-47-11, 11-47-  
2 12, and 11-47-18, carry a pistol or revolver in any vehicle or conveyance or on or about his or her  
3 person whether visible or concealed, except in his or her dwelling house or place of business or on  
4 land possessed by him or her or as provided in §§ 11-47-9 and 11-47-10. The provisions of these  
5 sections shall not apply to any person who is the holder of a valid license or permit issued by the  
6 licensing authority of another state, or territory of the United States, or political subdivision of the  
7 state or territory, allowing him or her to carry a pistol or revolver in any vehicle or conveyance or  
8 on or about his or her person whether visible or concealed, provided the person is merely  
9 transporting the firearm through the state in a vehicle or other conveyance without any intent on  
10 the part of the person to detain him or herself or remain within the state of Rhode Island. No person  
11 shall manufacture, sell, purchase, or possess a machine gun except as otherwise provided in this  
12 chapter. Every person violating the provision of this section shall, upon conviction, be punished by  
13 imprisonment for not less than one nor more than ten (10) years, or by a fine up to ten thousand  
14 dollars (\$10,000), or both, and except for a first conviction under this section, shall not be afforded  
15 the provisions of suspension or deferment of sentence, nor a probation.

16 (b) No person shall have in his or her possession or under his or her control any sawed-off  
17 shotgun or sawed-off rifle as defined in § 11-47-2. Any person convicted of violating this  
18 subsection shall be punished by imprisonment for up to ten (10) years, or by a fine of up to five  
19 thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

20 (c) No person shall have in his or her possession or under his or her control any firearm,  
21 [stun gun or taser](#) while the person delivers, possesses with intent to deliver, or manufactures a  
22 controlled substance. Any person convicted of violating this subsection shall be punished by  
23 imprisonment for not less than two (2) years nor more than twenty (20) years, and the sentence  
24 shall be consecutive to any sentence the person may receive for the delivery, possession with intent  
25 to deliver, or the manufacture of the controlled substance. It shall not be a defense to a violation of  
26 this subsection that a person has a license or permit to carry or possess a firearm.

27 (d) It shall be unlawful for any person to possess a bump-fire device, binary trigger, trigger  
28 crank, or any other device that when attached to a semi-automatic weapon allows full-automatic  
29 fire. Individuals who possess these items shall have ninety (90) days from the enactment of this  
30 section to either sell, destroy, or otherwise remove these items from the state of Rhode Island. Every  
31 person violating the provisions of this section shall, upon conviction, be punished by imprisonment  
32 for not less than one nor more than ten (10) years, or by a fine up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000),  
33 or both, and, except for a first conviction under this section, shall not be afforded the provisions of  
34 suspension or deferment of sentence, nor a probation.

1 (e) No person shall manufacture, sell, offer to sell, transfer, purchase, possess, or have  
2 under his or her control a ghost gun or an undetectable firearm or any firearm produced by a 3D  
3 printing process. Any person convicted of violating this subsection shall be punished by  
4 imprisonment of not more than ten (10) years, or by a fine up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or  
5 both and except for a first conviction under this section shall not be afforded the provisions of  
6 suspension or deferment of sentence, probation, nor fine. These provisions shall not apply to  
7 federally licensed manufacturers (FLN) pursuant to Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives  
8 (ATF) regulations.

9 (f) No license or permit shall be required to carry a taser or stun gun, concealed on their  
10 person, by any person eighteen (18) years or older for self-defense and all other legal purposes.  
11 Any person carrying a taser or stun gun pursuant to this section, shall be lawfully entitled to use it  
12 in self-defense when they have a reasonable belief that another person is about to inflict personal  
13 bodily injury or harm to themselves or another party. Any person carrying a taser or stun gun does  
14 not have a duty to retreat before utilizing the taser or stun gun in self-defense.

15 **11-47-42. Weapons other than firearms prohibited.**

16 (a)(1) No person shall carry or possess or attempt to use against another any instrument or  
17 weapon of the kind commonly known as a blackjack, slingshot, billy, sandclub, sandbag, metal  
18 knuckles, slap glove, bludgeon, ~~stun-gun~~, or the so called "Kung-Fu" weapons.

19 (2) No person shall with intent to use unlawfully against another, carry or possess a  
20 crossbow, dagger, dirk, stiletto, sword-in-cane, bowie knife, or other similar weapon designed to  
21 cut and stab another.

22 (3) No person shall wear or carry concealed upon his person, any of the above-mentioned  
23 instruments or weapons, or any razor, or knife of any description having a blade of more than three  
24 (3) inches in length measuring from the end of the handle where the blade is attached to the end of  
25 the blade, or other weapon of like kind or description.

26 Any person violating the provisions of these subsections shall be punished by a fine of not  
27 more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both,  
28 and the weapon so found shall be confiscated.

29 Any person violating the provisions of these subsections while he or she is incarcerated  
30 within the confines of the adult correctional institutions shall be punished by a fine of not less than  
31 one thousand dollars (\$1,000) nor more than three thousand dollars (\$3,000), or by imprisonment  
32 for not less than one year nor more than five (5) years, or both, and the weapon so found shall be  
33 confiscated.

34 (b) No person shall sell to a person under eighteen (18) years of age, without the written

1 authorization of the minor's parent or legal guardian, any stink bomb, blackjack, slingshot, bill,  
2 sandclub, sandbag, metal knuckles, slap glove, bludgeon, ~~stungun~~, paint ball gun, so called "kung-  
3 fu" weapons, dagger, dirk, stiletto, sword-in-cane, bowie knife, razor, or knife of any description  
4 having a blade of more than three inches (3") in length as described in subsection (a) of this section,  
5 or any multi-pronged star with sharpened edges designed to be used as a weapon and commonly  
6 known as a Chinese throwing star, except that an individual who is actually engaged in the  
7 instruction of martial arts and licensed under § 5-43-1 may carry and possess any multi-pronged  
8 star with sharpened edges for the sole purpose of instructional use. Any person violating the  
9 provisions of this subsection shall be punished by a fine of not less than one thousand dollars  
10 (\$1,000) nor more than three thousand dollars (\$3,000), or by imprisonment for not less than one  
11 year nor more than five (5) years, or both, and the weapons so found shall be confiscated.

12 SECTION 2. Chapter 11-47 of the General Laws entitled "Weapons" is hereby amended  
13 by adding thereto the following section:

14 **11-47-8.2. Purchase, possession, sale or use of stun gun or taser.**

15 (a) Any person eighteen (18) years of age or over may purchase or possess a stun gun or  
16 taser.

17 (b) No person shall sell or attempt to sell, transfer, deliver or furnish a stun gun or taser to  
18 a person who is less than eighteen (18) years of age. Any person convicted of violating the  
19 provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and may be punished by imprisonment for  
20 not less than one year nor more than five (5) years.

21 (c) No person shall use or attempt to use a stun gun or taser in the commission of a crime.  
22 Any person convicted of violating the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and  
23 may be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), or by imprisonment for not more  
24 than ten (10) years, or both.

25 (d) No person shall use or attempt to use a stun gun or taser on a police officer who is  
26 engaged in the performance of his or her duty. Any person convicted of violating the provisions of  
27 this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and may be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand  
28 dollars (\$10,000), or by imprisonment for not more than ten (10) years, or both. Any sentence  
29 imposed upon a person pursuant to this subsection shall be imposed consecutively to and not  
30 concurrently with any sentence imposed for the underlying crime or attempted crime, and the  
31 person shall not be afforded the benefits of suspension or deferment of sentence.

32 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- WEAPONS

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1           This act would add definitions of taser and stun gun to § 11-47-2 and provide that any  
2 person over the age of eighteen (18) is permitted to carry a taser or stun gun without a license and  
3 may use it in self defense if they have a reasonable belief that they are in fear of imminent bodily  
4 harm.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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