

**BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 1997  
By: Gutierrez  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Unamended)

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The purpose of this bill is to provide a legal and regulatory structure for the introduction of a new transportation technology that is not currently defined in Texas transportation law. Texas law currently does not outline nor include statutory parameters for the operation of such a device on the streets and sidewalks of the state. The unique features of this device and its potential for widespread use in the state require that it be specifically defined and regulated in the statutes.

House Bill 1997 defines this technology as an Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Device that has two non-tandem wheels, is self-balancing, propelled by an electric propulsion system and used to transport one person.

**RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee’s opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

**ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. An owner of an electric personal assistive mobility device (EPAMD) is not required to register the device with the State.

SECTION 2. An EPAMD is not defined as a motor vehicle under Sec. 541.201(11), Transportation Code.

SECTION 3. An EPAMD is not defined as a “slow-moving vehicle” as prescribed under Sec. 547.001(7), Transportation Code.

SECTION 4. Sec. 551.001 only applies to a person operating a bicycle on a highway or a path set aside for bicycles.

SECTION 5. ELECTRIC PERSONAL ASSISTIVE MOBILITY DEVICES. Defines an electric personal assistive mobility device as a two non-tandem wheeled device designed for moving one person, and the device is self-balancing and propelled by an electric propulsion system with an average power of 750 watts or one horsepower. A person may operate an EPAMD on a roadway with a speed limit less than 35 miles per hour. A person may not operate an EPAMD on a roadway designed for speeds greater than 35 miles per hour unless operated on a part of the roadway set aside exclusively for bicycle operation. A person may not operate an EPAMD on a roadway where bicycles are prohibited. A person may operate an EPAMD on a path set aside for bicycles operation. All other bicycle provisions apply to an EPAMD. A person may operate an EPAMD on a sidewalk.

SECTION 6. An EPAMD is not defined as a “motor vehicle.”

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2003