

**BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 4578  
By: Metcalf  
Transportation  
Committee Report (Unamended)

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

In April 2024, the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (TxDMV) reversed its ban on the registration and operation of Kei miniature vehicles on public roads. The bill author has informed the committee that, in recent years, these vehicles have been gaining in popularity across the country due to their small size, low cost, maneuverability, and fuel efficiency. Following TxDMV's decision, H.B. 4578 seeks to provide statutory clarity about the registration and highway operation of Kei vehicles in Texas.

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

**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**

H.B. 4578 amends the Transportation Code to establish that, for the purposes of issuing a title under the Certificate of Title Act or registering a vehicle under applicable state law, a miniature vehicle that satisfies either of the following criteria is considered to be a motor vehicle:

- the vehicle was 25 years of age or older at the time of import into the United States; or
- at the time of the issuance of the title or registration of the vehicle, as applicable, the vehicle is 25 years of age or older and has previously been issued a valid title in the United States.

H.B. 4578 defines "miniature vehicle" as a miniature car, truck, van, or bus manufactured in Japan that satisfies the following criteria:

- is powered by an internal combustion engine with a displacement of 1,200 cubic centimeters or less;
- has a width of 60 inches or less;
- has a length of 140 inches or less;
- has a height of 80 inches or less;
- has a top speed of at least 50 miles per hour;
- is designed to propel itself with four or more tires in contact with the ground;
- is equipped with a speedometer and all equipment required for miniature vehicles under the bill's provisions relating to miniature vehicle equipment standards or rules adopted by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) under those provisions; and
- has a manufacturer's permanent vehicle identification number, defined by reference to the Certificate of Title Act.

H.B. 4578 authorizes a person to operate a miniature vehicle on a public highway only if the following conditions are met:

- the vehicle has been registered and titled in accordance with state law, including the bill's provisions; and
- the vehicle is capable of operating in compliance with applicable traffic laws in statutory provisions relating to vehicles and traffic.

H.B. 4578 requires a miniature vehicle to be equipped with the following items in compliance with statutory provisions relating to vehicle equipment:

- headlamps;
- stoplamps;
- turn signal lamps;
- tail lamps;
- parking brake;
- rearview mirror; and
- windshield wipers.

The bill establishes that a statutory provision relating to vehicle equipment that requires equipment not listed by the bill does not apply to a miniature vehicle unless DPS by rule specifically applies the provision to miniature vehicles.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

September 1, 2025.