



SENATE BILL 432: Mini-Truck Classification.

2019-2020 General Assembly

Committee:	Senate Finance. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate	Date:	April 15, 2019
Introduced by:	Sen. Ballard	Prepared by:	Cindy Avrette
Analysis of:	First Edition		Staff Attorney

OVERVIEW: *Senate Bill 432 would define and allow for the operation of mini-trucks on roadways with certain restrictions.*

CURRENT LAW: Mini-trucks are often sold as off-road vehicles for farms and construction sites and are smaller than conventional small trucks. Mini-trucks have the capacity to reach top speeds of 55 mph or more, but many are sold with devices that limit their speed to 25 mph. As an off-road vehicle, they are not subject to federal safety standards. The Division of Motor Vehicles does not currently register mini-trucks, and therefore they may not be operated on the highways. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 21 states allow mini-trucks on specific portions of public roads.¹

BILL ANALYSIS: Section 1 of the bill would define a mini-truck as a motor vehicle designed, used, or maintained primarily for the transportation of property that meets all of the following requirements: (i) has four wheels; (ii) an engine displacement of 660cc or less; (iii) an overall length of 130 inches or less; (iv) an overall height of 78 inches or less; and (v) an overall width of 60 inches or less.

Section 2 of the bill would make the registration fee for mini-trucks the same as a private passenger vehicle of not more than 15 passengers (\$36). This section would also require that low-speed vehicles or mini-trucks offered for rent would pay the same registration fee as an U-drive it automobile (\$66).

Section 3 of the bill would place similar restrictions and requirements on the operation of mini-trucks as currently exist for low-speed vehicles. Those restrictions would be as follows:

- Mini-trucks would only be allowed to operate on streets and highways where the posted speed limit is 55 mph or less.
- Mini-trucks would need to be equipped with certain equipment similar to that of a low-speed vehicle, and that equipment must be maintained in proper working order.
- Mini-trucks would be required to be register and insured.
- Mini-trucks would be required to abide by NCDOT roadway prohibitions in the interest of safety.
- Mini-trucks would not be considered antique or historic vehicles regardless of age.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This bill would become effective when it becomes law.

Howard Marsilio, counsel to Senate Transportation, substantially contributed to this summary.

¹ <https://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/laws/minitrucks>

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