

PRESS RELEASE

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE (STANDING) ON GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MATTERS ON THE CYBERCRIME BILL, 2024 AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

On 14th February, 2024 the Honourable the Senate committed the following Bills:

Cybercrime Bill, 2024 and the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (Amendment) Bill, 2024

to a Joint Select Committee (Standing) of the two Houses of Parliament comprising four (4) members of the Honourable the House of Assembly and three (3) members of the Honourable the Senate and has approved the following terms of reference for the Committee:

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. To enquire into and determine whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted fulfils the expressed purposes to ensure compliance with the International Conventions, global standards and best practices to counter cybercrime and to ensure international cooperation in the combatting of cybercrime.
2. To examine whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted curtails the citizens' fundamental rights to freedom of expression as against the protection of the reputation, rights and freedoms of other persons or their private lives.
3. To examine whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted provides the necessary checks and balances, safeguards and independent oversight to protect citizens' human rights, liberties and privacy rights from potential abuses, including from expansive law enforcement powers in order to prevent miscarriages of justice.
4. To examine whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted provides adequate protection to all of the specific categories of persons who may potentially be vulnerable to cybercrime.

5. To examine whether any of the provisions of the Cybercrime Bill as drafted are vague, overly broad, arbitrary and/or subjective and uncertain in its imposition of liability.
6. To examine whether the penalties imposed in the Cybercrime Bill as drafted are disproportionate and/or unreasonable in any way.
7. To examine whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted provides adequate protection for whistleblowers who expose cyber-related wrongdoing and, if not, whether such protection is provided in any other legislation.
8. To consider whether the Cybercrime Bill as drafted could impede innovation in the technology sector and discourage investment and research in digital infrastructure.
9. To consider whether the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters (Amendment) Bill, 2024 as drafted provides adequately for mutual international assistance in matters relating to computer-related crimes and for related matters.
10. To make recommended changes, if deemed necessary, to the Bills as drafted for further consideration by the Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

Parliament has appointed the following members to the Joint Select Committee (Standing) on Governance and Policy Matters:

Mr. Edmund G. Hinkson, S.C., M.P.

Mr. Peter R. Phillips, J.P., M.P.

Dr. Romel O. Springer, J.P., M.P.

Mr. Ralph A. Thorne, K.C., M.P.

Senator Gregory P. B. Nicholls

Senator Ryan O. Walters

Senator the Hon. Lindell E. Nurse

The Committee commenced its work on **Monday, April 8th, 2024 at 2:00 pm at the Parliament of Barbados, Parliament Buildings, Trafalgar Street, Bridgetown.**

The Bills are available online at www.barbadosparliament.com.

The Bills are available for comment on the Barbados Parliament's website.

In keeping with parliamentary practice, the Committee through this press release invites and encourages the public whether as individuals, professional organisations, community based groups, official and unofficial bodies with special interest and generally anyone who may assist with its work to submit memoranda or other documents setting out their views and comments on the issues.

The Committee also encourages those persons who may tender written submissions to indicate whether they would also want to appear in person before the Committee to give oral presentations of no more than ten (10) minutes.

The Committee also invites persons who want only to make an oral presentation to indicate such desire and interest to the Committee.

The Committee may also invite persons or summon witnesses under the law to attend its meetings to give evidence to help towards formulating a well informed and balanced report on the captioned subject matter.

The Committee's paramount mission will be to conduct a thorough analysis within its mandate to determine whether the provisions of the Bill as they currently stand would achieve their stated objectives.

Persons should submit their views, memoranda to the Clerk of Parliament, Parliament of Barbados, Parliament Buildings, Trafalgar Street, Bridgetown.

Those persons who want to appear before the Committee to make oral presentations should indicate their interest in so doing to the Clerk of Parliament at the above address.

Written communication also includes email. Mailed responses should be addressed to the Clerk of Parliament, Parliament of Barbados, Parliament Buildings, Trafalgar Street, Bridgetown.

E-mails should be sent to parliamentbarbados@caribsurf.com.

It should be noted that written submissions should reach the Clerk of Parliament no later than Friday 26th, April, 2024.

The proceedings of the Joint Select Committee (Standing) will take place at the Parliament of Barbados and will be conducted in public.

The proceedings will be streamed live on the Barbados Parliament's website, on social media and broadcast on CBC TV whenever possible.

Notice of the dates when the Select Committee will sit will be posted via the Barbados Parliament website.

Reports by the Committee will be laid in both Houses of Parliament.