

# STATEMENT

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## **Statement By Speaker of The House of Assembly Honourable Corine George- Massicote On The Importance of An Autonomous Legislature And The House of Assembly (Management), Bill 2025**

**Release Date:** 31 October, 2025



**STATEMENT BY SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
HONOURABLE CORINE GEORGE-MASSICOTE  
AT THE TENTH SITTING OF THE SECOND SESSION  
OF THE FIFTH HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS  
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF AN AUTONOMOUS LEGISLATURE  
AND THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY (MANAGEMENT), BILL 2025  
Thursday 30th October, 2025**

Honourable Members of this House, and to the people of the Virgin Islands,

As Speaker of the House of Assembly, I take this opportunity to address a matter of great national importance: the autonomy of this Honourable House and the

significance of the House of Assembly (Management) Bill, 2025, which will receive its second and third readings in this sitting.

An autonomous legislature is the foundation of every functioning democracy. It is within these chambers that the voice of the people finds expression, where laws are created, and where government is held accountable. For this process to have true meaning, the legislature must be able to act independently, free from interference, and guided only by the Constitution, the Standing Orders, and the will of the people.

For many years, the operational and administrative framework of this House has relied on external mechanisms that were not fully aligned with the principle of legislative autonomy. The introduction of the House of Assembly (Management) Bill, 2025 seeks to correct this. This Bill represents not merely an administrative reform, but a clear statement of constitutional maturity and democratic progress.

The Bill establishes a well-defined governance structure that empowers the House to manage its own affairs, including staffing, budgeting, procedural integrity, and institutional development. It ensures that the House of Assembly has the necessary tools and authority to conduct its business with transparency, efficiency, and independence.

An autonomous legislature best serves the people when it is properly resourced, effectively governed, and fully accountable to the citizens it represents. This Bill ensures that those principles are not only upheld in practice, but also firmly enshrined in law.

Importantly, this initiative has not been undertaken in isolation.

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), of which this House is a proud member, has consistently advocated for strong, independent, and well-resourced legislatures throughout the Commonwealth. The CPA's Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures affirm that parliamentary independence is essential to the separation of powers and to the overall health of democracy.

The CPA's technical guidance and capacity-building support have strengthened our efforts to bring the House of Assembly of the Virgin Islands in line with international

standards of legislative governance. This Bill, therefore, responds not only to local needs, but also aligns our institution with global best practices in parliamentary management, integrity, and accountability.

Through the adoption of this framework, the Virgin Islands will join the many parliaments across the Commonwealth that have implemented reforms to strengthen institutional autonomy. This demonstrates to the world that our democracy continues to evolve and that we are committed to governance that is transparent, credible, and centered on the needs of the people.

To the public, I say this: the autonomy of the House is not about separating the legislature from the people; rather, it is about bringing the people closer to the centre of governance. It ensures that your representatives can perform their duties without fear or favour, guided only by what is right and just. It ensures that your voices are heard clearly and acted upon with transparency and integrity.

Honourable Members, as this Bill receives its second and third readings in this sitting, we must recognise this moment as a significant milestone in our ongoing journey toward good governance and institutional integrity. The House of Assembly (Management) Bill, 2025 marks a new chapter in the growth of this institution. It strengthens democracy, enhances accountability, and deepens the trust of the people in their legislature.

As Speaker, I remain committed to upholding the dignity and independence of this Honourable House, ensuring that its proceedings reflect fairness, respect, and the highest standards of public service.

Let this moment remind us that democracy is not sustained by words alone, but by systems that guarantee balance, transparency, and independence. The passage of this Bill will stand as a testament to our collective resolve to preserve those principles for generations to come.

May this House continue to serve as a beacon of integrity, accountability, and people-centered governance in the Virgin Islands.

Thank you.

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**Additional Documents or Media**

- [statement by hon corine george-massicote on the importance of an autonomous legislature.pdf](#)