

PRESS RELEASE

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HoA Staff Attend Regional A.I. and Parliamentary Modernisation Workshop

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The House of Assembly of the Virgin Islands recently participated in the Caribbean Regional Workshop, “Applying AI and Digital Solutions to Modernise Parliamentary Practice,” held from 12 to 13 September 2026 at Florida International University in Miami, Florida.

The opportunity for the House of Assembly’s participation was sponsored by the host, the House Democracy Partnership of the United States House of Representatives, in collaboration with ParlAmericas and the POPVOX Foundation. The workshop brought together approximately 30 parliamentary representatives from across the Caribbean, including Clerks, Hansard professionals, information technology specialists, communications personnel and other parliamentary officers.

Representing the House of Assembly were Theresa Penn, Executive Officer, and Damian McGowan, Hansard Editor. The workshop formed part of the Digital Parliaments Project, which supports legislatures in strengthening institutional systems, digitising parliamentary records and responsibly adopting emerging technologies.

The sessions explored practical applications of artificial intelligence and digital tools to improve legislative research, records management, administrative efficiency, public access to information and the preservation of parliamentary records. Participants also examined digitisation standards, institutional AI policies, cybersecurity, data protection, staff training and the need for human oversight when using AI-generated information.

Ms. Penn described the workshop as “a valuable and informative experience” that provided practical insight into how AI and digital technologies can support parliamentary work. She noted the potential for technology to improve records management, research, administrative efficiency and public access to parliamentary information, while emphasising the importance of accuracy, confidentiality, cybersecurity and responsible implementation. She said,

“The central message of the workshop was that artificial intelligence should support parliamentary work, not replace the human judgment, accountability and

institutional processes that underpin parliamentary democracy. The engagement also enabled the Virgin Islands to exchange experiences with parliamentary colleagues from across the Caribbean and consider approaches that may be adapted to the Territory's parliamentary context."

Mr. McGowan said the workshop provided "an important forum" for examining how AI, digitisation and other emerging technologies can be incorporated responsibly into parliamentary operations. He highlighted the potential for AI-enabled systems to assist with digitising, organising, searching and retrieving Bills, Hansards, minutes and other parliamentary records. He said,

"Participation in the workshop supports the House of Assembly's ongoing efforts to explore opportunities for digital transformation and institutional modernisation. Areas of potential relevance include the digitisation of parliamentary records, improved legislative research, AI-assisted Hansard transcription subject to human verification, enhanced information management and more accessible parliamentary resources. Through careful planning and responsible implementation, digital solutions can contribute to a more efficient, accessible and modern House of Assembly."

The House of Assembly recognises that effective modernisation extends beyond the adoption of technology. It requires sound governance, accurate and accessible data, trained personnel, cybersecurity, data protection and clear safeguards for confidential and sensitive parliamentary information.

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