



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE AUTOMATED SYSTEMS

Old City Hall 1001 East Broad Street, Suite 210
Richmond, VA 23219

Fritz Sassine, Director

Phone: (804) 786-1895

<https://dlas.virginia.gov>

July 30, 2026

Legislative Information Technology (IT) Council

Subject: Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS) Development Priorities Through 2027 Fiscal Year

Dear members of the council,

Pursuant to Chapter 1, Item 1, Section W.2 of the Acts of Assembly of the 2026 First Special Session of the Virginia General Assembly, the Division of Legislative Automated Systems (DLAS) submits the following list of development priorities for approval.

Legislative Information System (LIS)

Bug fixes and Feature updates

Bug fixes and LIS enhancement requests were provided by both the House and Senate Chief Technology Officers (CTOs). The changes include development changes that will be released to LIS prior to the 2027 General Assembly session.

The discussion centers on improving how legislative systems handle reconsidered votes, bill versioning, and committee/floor processes. A key issue is that when votes are reconsidered, the system may not know which bill version is being acted on, especially if the updated version is not yet posted. The proposed approach is to default to "legislative text pending" and rely on clearer business rules from both chambers. Additional concerns include duplicate or conflicting vote displays on calendars, incorrect bill statuses after reconsideration, and inconsistencies in how substitutes, amendments, and programmatic notes are tracked and ordered. There is also a push to decouple committee actions from Senate floor minutes and to modernize processes like committee reports and vote sheet publishing.

Operational and system issues span calendar management, data integrity, and user interface limitations. Examples include duplicate calendar entries after reconsideration, incorrect emergency flags, missing or inconsistent committee votes, PDF mismatches after publishing, and bugs in version control and legislation event processing. Communication workflows are also affected, with signature plates, titles, and bill viability statuses not consistently displaying due to event sequencing or data linkage issues. Additional challenges involve co-patron management, version duplication, and role-based User Interface (UI) needs for House and Senate users.

Lobbyist-in-a-Box (LIAB)

Improvements to the Lobbyist-in-a-Box application are necessary to address deficiencies in the current notification process, which has at times proven unreliable and operationally disruptive. Enhancing the consistency, timeliness, and traceability of system-generated notifications will be critical to ensuring users receive accurate and actionable information. DLAS is also evaluating the notification process associated with tracked legislation when it is scheduled for committee and subcommittee agendas and dockets.

Additionally, the current authentication model does not fully align with Microsoft security requirements and best practices. Multi-factor Authentication (MFA) is not consistently enforced across all user access scenarios, creating potential security gaps. Expanding MFA coverage to all applicable access points is essential to strengthen identity assurance, reduce risk, and maintain compliance with modern security standards.

Bill Drafting System (BDS)

The Bill Drafting System currently runs on an antiquated database and uses outdated development code. A newly designed interface for usability will be developed operating on a modern database. The Division of Legislative Services (DLS) has requested changes to the application and functionality. The work has commenced and we will be meeting with DLS on a regular basis to provide updates.

The system enhancements focus on strengthening security, user management, and integration with LIS and e-Filing systems while aligning with existing workflows. This includes implementing OAuth 2.0 with resilient token handling, enabling role-based access controls through both UI and database updates, and enforcing visibility restrictions based on user conflicts. Core functionality expands request tracking and reporting through patron reports, draft visibility by role, and support for historical data across multiple sessions. Integration points also extend to publishing amendments, tracking request limits, and synchronizing draft and bill data, ensuring consistency between drafting systems and legislative records.

On the drafting and authoring side, the roadmap emphasizes automation, usability, and accuracy in legislative document creation. Features include template-driven draft creation, automated population of bill metadata, advanced editing tools (track changes, versioning, comparisons), and improved handling of substitutes, summaries, and Governor's recommendations. Workflow enhancements support draft lifecycle management, collaboration controls (checkout, locking, overrides), and batch operations, alongside improved formatting fidelity with LIS (line numbering, PDF previews, table handling). Additional capabilities include enhanced search, reporting, committee management, and conference report automation, all aimed at increasing efficiency, reducing manual errors, and ensuring high-quality legislative output.

e-Filing

Like BDS, e-Filing also runs on an antiquated database and uses outdated development code.

Our stakeholders have requested changes to the application. A meeting with the Senate and House IT was held and their requirements were gathered. Work on e-Filing will start in September and development work will be in tandem with BDS development.

The work is pointing to a broader modernization of legislative processing across BDS, e-Filing, LIS, and chamber automation, with a strong focus on making the Senate Clerk and member workflows more usable and consistent. The main themes are replacing the current interface, fixing unreliable controls, improving co-patron handling, tightening bill numbering and filing-status actions, and making patron reports and Clerk views more flexible and transparent for users.

It also expands the process map across the full lifecycle of legislation: patron reports, co-patronage before and after filing, committee and floor substitutes and amendments, engrossing, conference reports, submittals, Governor's actions, enrolling, and cross-over House bill processing. Senate-specific needs include sorting introduced bills by submit time, showing summary and text links, supporting secondary referrals, handling "laid on" actions for resolutions, and improving cross-over communication workflows.

Budget System

The Budget system has not been updated for 5 years and requires modernization.

DLAS will meet with both the House Appropriations Committee (HAC) and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee (SFAC) to gather requirements and complete some enhancements to the budget system. Some enhancements requested include:

Short bill capability for money committee use. The system shall support the creation of a "short bill" that allows a money committee to produce a bill containing a defined set of budget items with proposed changes, including cases where the bill is intended to support a crossover question or similar legislative decision point. The workflow shall accommodate drafting through DLS and Bill Drafting, while allowing the final output to be evaluated and revised if the initial result is not satisfactory. The example context includes HB1384 (2026), which was used as a reference point for this need.

More effective control of Budget Amendment tabs. The system shall provide more effective control over Budget Amendment tabs by allowing tabs to be shown or hidden based on chamber and session. This control should be managed within the database and administered by DLAS, with the ability to update the configuration upon request. The existing budget amendment interface already organizes amendments by stage and supports multiple views, so this requirement adds a governance layer to that structure.

Respectfully,



Fritz Sassine

Director, Division of Legislative Automated Systems

fsassine@dlas.virginia.gov

(804) 371-8961