

საქართველოს ახალგაზრდა იურისტთა ასოციაცია GEORGIAN YOUNG LAWYERS' ASSOCIATION



Spring Session of the Parliament of Georgia has Commenced Today

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Spring session of the Parliament of Georgia opened today, on February 1 and will close on January 24. At the spring session, the Parliament will discuss several significant draft laws, including:

1. Draft law on amendments and supplements to the law of Georgia on broadcasting;
2. Charter of Freedom

3. Draft law on supplements to the Law on occupied territories of Georgia.

GYLA has already submitted its initial legal opinions about the supplements and amendments to the law of Georgia on broadcasting, and supplements to the law on occupied territories of Georgia to the Parliament of Georgia, and it has applied to the Speaker of the Parliament with a letter regarding the Charter of Freedom.

GYLA has been actively involved in the process of legal drafting, and in frames of its cooperation with the Parliament of Georgia, it systematically prepares expert opinions regarding significant legal drafts. Furthermore, GYLA will also elaborate and submit legislative proposals to the Parliament of Georgia.

At the beginning of the Spring Session of the Parliament, GYLA would like to draw attention to the aforementioned legal drafts that can have a significant impact on everyday lives of population:

1) GYLA remains hopeful that amendments and supplements to the law of Georgia on broadcasting will ensure genuine transparency of media owners and their financial position. It is imperative that public has access to information about all physical entities that have direct or indirect ownership of media outlets in the broadcasting sphere. Furthermore, we deem better financial transparency, including information about fund origins in the broadcasting sphere pivotal. We also believe that financial accountability of national broadcasters shall be increased in proportion to their capacity to influence the audience.

2) The Georgian Young Lawyers' Association categorically opposes turning current draft of the Charter of Freedom into law. Regrettably, the document has already been passed with second hearing. Some provisions of the draft do not make sense at all and in some cases, it is impossible to make out what the intentions of the author were. Multiple grammatical errors and content-wise faults produce high threat of human rights violation. Although purpose of the Charter of Freedom is to govern broad sphere of relations, it fails to effectively regulate them or to realize its objectives.

3) The draft law on supplements to the law on occupied territories of Georgia entails a compulsion to place certain writings on print materials. The draft law envisages placement of information about occupied territories of Georgia on printed materials

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produced by all entities. We believe that there is no pressing social need of adoption of the aforementioned supplement and it disproportionately limits freedom of expression. We deem it necessary to limit the sphere governed by the norm in a way that it would not apply to natural persons. The draft requires revision for it to be harmonized with the Constitution of Georgia and European Convention.

Furthermore, at the Spring Session, the Parliament is scheduled to review the draft law on protection of personal data and draft of Administrative Procedure Code of Georgia, as well as to commence elaboration of amendments and supplement to Chapter 3 (Freedom of Information) of the General Administrative Code.

GYLA is interested in the aforementioned issue and it is planning to participate in the process of elaboration along the lines of its mandate.

GYLA remains hopeful that work of the Parliament of Georgia during its spring session will be fruitful and will have tangible results in the field of human rights protection.