

Legislative Updates

From the National Assembly of Korea

Key Legislation Passed in August 2026



Amendments to the National Assembly Act and the Confirmation Hearing Act

The National Assembly Steering Committee approved amendments to the National Assembly Act and the Confirmation Hearing Act. The amendments require the head of the newly established Serious Crimes Investigation Agency (SCIA), created as part of broader prosecutorial reform efforts, to undergo a National Assembly confirmation hearing.

The amendments add the SCIA chief to the list of public office nominees subject to confirmation hearings under the National Assembly Act. The change follows the enactment of legislation establishing the SCIA, which is scheduled to begin operations on October 2, 2026.

The amendments also streamline procedures for requesting the submission of confirmation hearing reports by applying the definition of public office nominees under the National Assembly Act, rather than separately listing the positions subject to such requests.

The amendments take effect upon promulgation, allowing the appointment process for the inaugural SCIA chief to begin before the agency becomes operational.



Amendment to the Framework Act on Carbon Neutrality and Green Growth for Coping with Climate Crisis

The National Assembly's Special Committee on the Climate Crisis approved an amendment establishing legally defined ranges for Korea's mid- and long-term greenhouse gas reduction targets from 2031 to 2049 at five-year intervals.

The amendment responds to a Constitutional Court ruling that found the absence of legally defined post-2030 emissions reduction targets incompatible with the Constitution. It sets reduction target ranges of 53–61% for 2035, 69–80% for 2040, and 84–90% for 2045, while requiring future targets to reflect Korea's contribution to global climate efforts and avoid placing an excessive burden on future generations.

The bill also authorizes government support for industrial R&D and capital investment, establishes a Climate Science Committee, and provides a legal basis for issuing green government bonds.

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Amendment to the Personal Information Protection Act

The amendment establishes a framework for using lawfully collected personal information in the development of artificial intelligence. It also strengthens safeguards for data protection and transparency.

Personal information may be used when AI development cannot reasonably be conducted with anonymized or pseudonymized data alone. Such use is subject to review and approval by the Personal Information Protection Commission (PIPC). Appropriate safeguards must be in place, and the use must serve the public or broader social interest. The risk of harm to individuals or third parties must also be sufficiently low.

For higher-risk cases, including the use of sensitive or uniquely identifying information, the amendment may require a prior risk assessment. The PIPC will also monitor compliance and may restrict data processing when the applicable conditions are not met.

Amendment to the Special Act on the Expansion of the National Backbone Power Grid

The amendment allows government-approved private entities to participate in the development of the national backbone power grid. Upon completion, the transmission facilities must be transferred to Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO).

The measure is intended to accelerate grid expansion amid growing electricity demand from AI data centers and semiconductor industrial complexes. It will apply through December 31, 2029, with government oversight of project costs and private developers responsible for additional costs resulting from their own actions.

Key Developments in the National Assembly: August 2026



Aug 4

- Science, ICT, Broadcasting and Communications Committee sends protest letter to U.S. House of Representatives regarding Coupang

Aug 13

- Speaker Jo Jung-sik meets with Unification Minister Chung Dong-young

Aug 14

- National Assembly holds eve-of-celebration event for the 81st Anniversary of National Liberation (Gwangbokjeol)
- Speaker Jo Jung-sik meets with Bill Gates, Chairman of the Gates Foundation

Aug 20

- Plenary session passes 73 bills, including the National Assembly Act, Public Housing Act, and School Site Act
- Speaker Jo Jung-sik formally launches the Task Force for Streamlining Unconstitutional Legislation

Aug 26

- Plenary session passes 36 bills, including the Carbon Neutrality Framework Act, Probation Act, and UN Ocean Assembly Support Act

This material is distributed by the Korea Inter-Parliamentary Exchange Center (KIPEC) on behalf of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

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