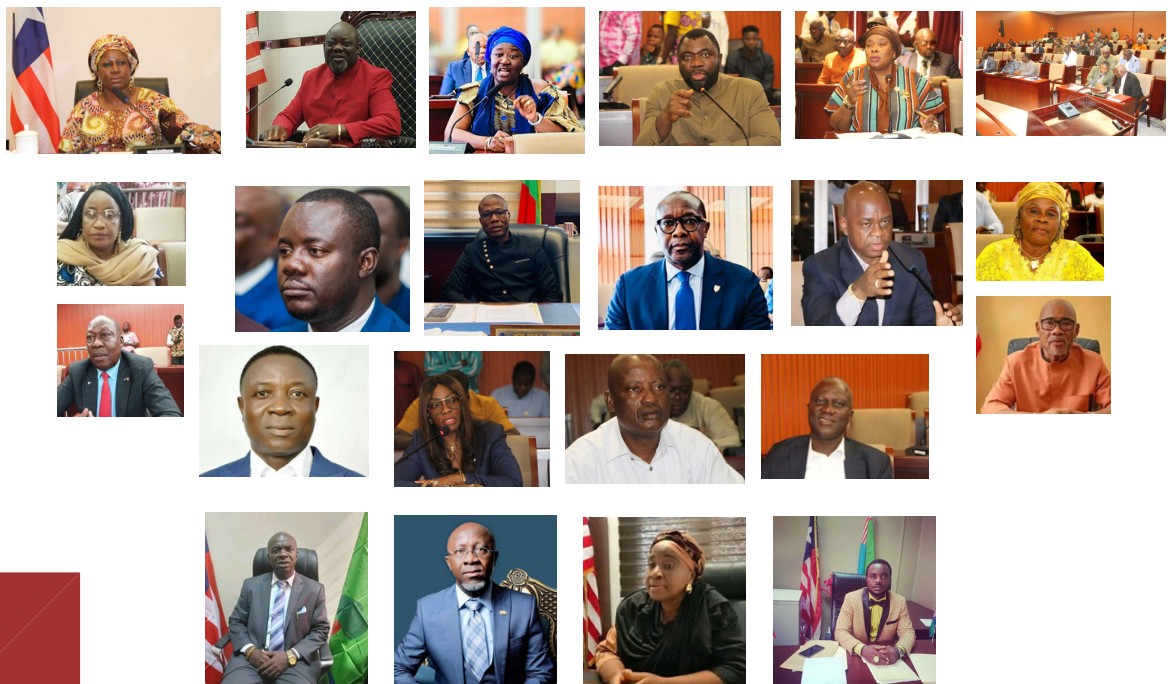




“Power, People, and Plenary: Are the People’s Voices Being Heard?”



INFOQUEST: Lawmakers Tracker Annual Legislative Monitoring Report January 2025 – December 2025

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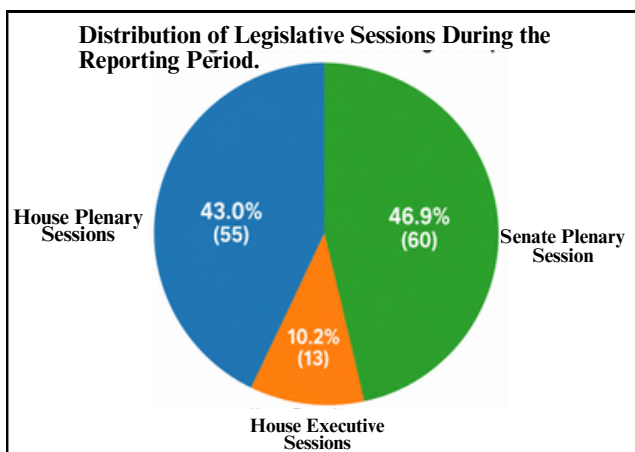
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1.0. Executive Summary

This Annual Edition of InfoQuest’s Legislative Monitoring Initiative, published under the theme **“Power, People, and Plenary: Are the People’s Voices Being Heard?”** presents the findings of a year-long, systematic observation of the Liberian Legislature covering the period January to December 2025. The report evaluates how effectively the National Legislature fulfilled its constitutional responsibilities across the three core democratic functions of Oversight, Representation, and Lawmaking, while also examining institutional governance, transparency, inclusion, and the broader interplay of political interests and public accountability. As a fully self-funded and independently managed initiative, this monitoring exercise reflects InfoQuest’s commitment to strengthening democratic institutions and empowering citizens with credible, evidence-based information about the performance of their elected Lawmakers. While proud to sustain this work independently, InfoQuest remains open to strategic partnerships that can expand the scope and depth of legislative accountability monitoring across Liberia.

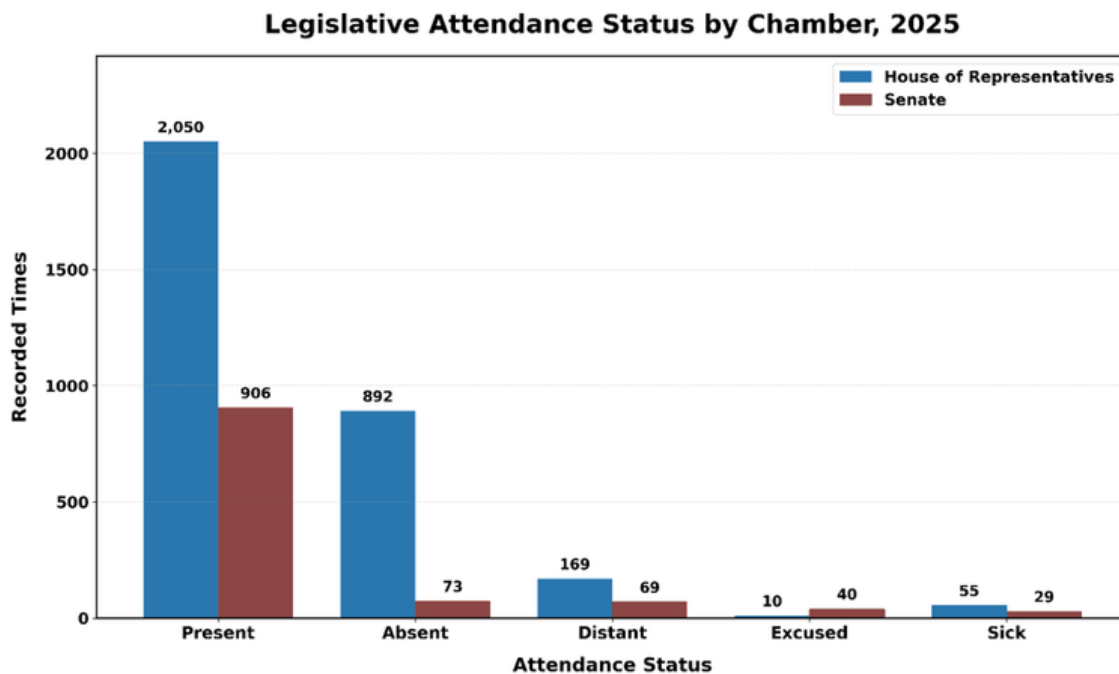
The methodology for this assessment builds on previous monitoring approaches. Two trained monitors were assigned to the Legislature one to the House of Representatives and one to the Liberian Senate to observe all regular plenary sessions held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Additional verification was conducted through follow-ups with clerical staff in the Offices of the Chief Clerk and the Secretary of the Senate. Prior to the commencement of the 2025 monitoring cycle, InfoQuest convened two-day indicators review workshop that brought together civil society actors, and media institutions to refine and strengthen the scorecard indicators. These refinements enhanced the quality, accuracy, and relevance of the monitoring process. Each monitor used a standardized daily data-capture form and audio recordings to ensure consistency and reliability in data collection. The grading system applied assigns equal weight to each performance component, with percentage scores interpreted according to a scale where **50–59** represents an **F**, **60–69** a **D**, **70–79** a **C**, **80–89** a **B**, and **90–100** an **A**.

During the reporting period, the House of Representatives held fifty-five plenary sessions and thirteen Executive Sessions, while the Senate convened sixty plenary sittings.

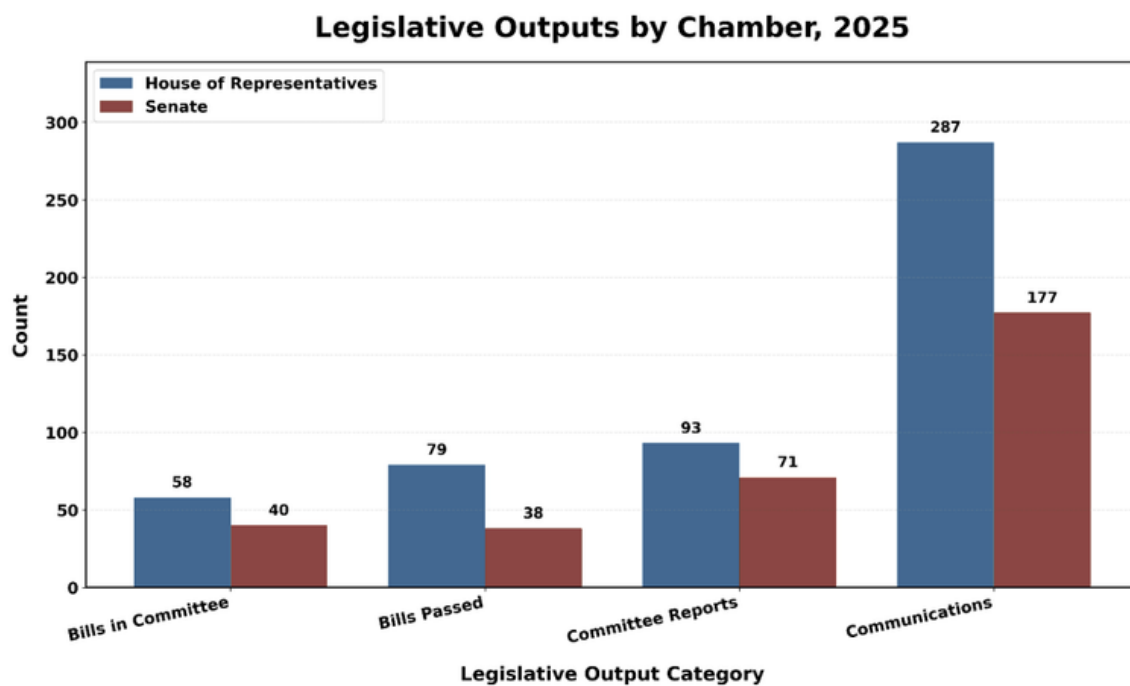


InfoQuest monitors observed all sessions across both chambers, tracking attendance, absenteeism, debate participation, bill sponsorship, committee activities, oversight appearances, legislative communications, and compliance with procedural rules. This comprehensive approach ensures that the findings presented in this report are grounded in verifiable data rather than perception, thereby strengthening public trust in the conclusions drawn.

The monitoring revealed a Legislature that maintains procedural order but continues to struggle with deeper issues of accountability, transparency, and equitable participation. While lawmakers generally adhered to standing rules speaking only when recognized, respecting differing viewpoints, following formal agenda procedures, and maintaining quorum, these procedural strengths did not always translate into substantive democratic effectiveness. Attendance patterns, for instance, showed troubling disparities. The House recorded 2,050 present times, 892 absences, 169 distant times, 10 excused absences, and 55 sick times. The Senate recorded 906 present times, 73 absences, 69 distant times, 40 excused absences, and 29 sick times. Only 5% of Representatives achieved an “A” attendance grade, compared to 28% of Senators, while 13% of Representatives received an “F.” These figures indicate that many constituencies are not consistently represented during legislative decision-making.



Oversight one of the Legislature’s most critical responsibilities remains weak and opaque. Committee operations, which should serve as the engine of legislative scrutiny, are often conducted without accessible minutes, timely reports, or public transparency. InfoQuest recorded 71 committee reports at the Senate and 93 at the House, along with 177 Senate communications and 287 House communications. While these outputs suggest activity, the lack of transparency and inconsistent documentation undermine public confidence in the effectiveness of legislative oversight. Lawmaking activity during the period showed moderate productivity but uneven engagement among members. The Senate recorded 40 bills in committee rooms and passed 38, while the House recorded 58 bills in committee rooms and passed 79. A small group of lawmakers particularly Hon. Thomas Romeo Quioh, Hon. Ernest Manseah, and Hon. Julie Wiah dominated bill sponsorship and legislative initiatives, while many members introduced few or no substantive measures. Notably, a significant portion of the bills passed originated from the Executive, raising concerns about legislative independence and the balance of power in national governance.



Participation in plenary debate an essential component of representation also revealed disparities. While some lawmakers actively contributed to discussions on national issues, many participated minimally or not at all. Gender disparities were particularly stark, with some sessions recording no female participation. This lack of inclusivity limits the diversity of perspectives in policymaking and undermines the representative character of the Legislature.

Institutional governance challenges further affected legislative performance. None of the observed sessions began at the official 10:00 AM start time. House sessions typically began between 10:30 and 11:00 AM, while Senate sessions often started between 12:00 and 2:00 PM. Persistent delays reduced productive hours and compressed debate time. Additionally, limited public access to legislative information, inconsistent communication practices, and infrastructural constraints particularly unreliable electricity and internet connectivity continued to hinder legislative operations. Taken together, the findings paint a clear picture of a Legislature that demonstrates procedural formality but faces substantive gaps in accountability, transparency, punctuality, inclusion, and equitable participation. The institution shows activity but not always effectiveness; presence but not always engagement; process but not always impact. For citizens, this means that representation is uneven and oversight is weaker than it should be.

InfoQuest believes that strengthening the Legislature is essential for strengthening Liberia's democracy. To this end, the report calls for urgent reforms to enforce attendance standards, open committee processes to public scrutiny, strengthen oversight of public spending, increase women's participation, improve transparency systems, encourage broader legislative initiative, and enhance public communication and civic engagement. Public office is a public trust, and citizens deserve active, transparent, and accountable representation. InfoQuest remains committed to independent legislative monitoring and citizen empowerment. By publishing objective, verifiable data, we aim to strengthen democratic accountability and ensure that elected officials remain answerable to the people they serve. A more transparent and responsive Legislature is not only desirable it is essential for Liberia's democratic future.

2.0 Background

The InfoQuest (IQ) initiated monitoring the Liberian Legislature in 2024. This monitoring initiative is aimed at assessing and informing the public about the performance of the Legislature as one of the principal units of governance in Liberia. InfoQuest's focus of monitoring the Liberian Legislature is on its' three constitutional functions: representation, lawmaking and oversight. Initially, the monitoring reports were released quarterly but now are being done annually. This monitoring report being presented covers activities at the legislature recorded by InfoQuest from January 2025 to December 2025. The report contains highlights of each legislator's involvements and interactions in the plenaries of both houses (Senate and Representatives).

InfoQuest considers monitoring the performance of the Liberian Legislature as its flagship program that is geared towards strengthening the decision-making of each legislator at the national and local levels of the legislative governance processes.

To ascertain proper and unbiased accountability of the monitoring process, InfoQuest maintains a well-designed monitoring system that encapsulates indicators and scorecard formulated based on the legislature's statutory mandates. The system is freed of material misstatements, absolutely, no personal or political contacts can influence the overall outcome of the process, data used to derive the performance ratings of the Liberian's Legislature and individual legislators are publicly available records based at the legislature, such as:

Plenary Attendance (Sittings), Plenary Participation, Number of laws proffered/introduced, Committees' Reports, and Communications.

A. Plenary Session: A platform where compelling national governance issues are raised and debated by legislators as required by their defined statutory functions. InfoQuest monitors maintain records of each legislator during plenary sittings.

B. Plenary Participation: A forum for legislators' constituency representation where inputs and stance on issues are freely expressed on plenary floors.

C. Committee Activities: The workings of the legislature are mostly committee based where issues are fully discussed and reports made to plenary for consideration.

Communications: Letters written by individual lawmakers to plenary and responsible in the public on compelling issues of national and local impacts.

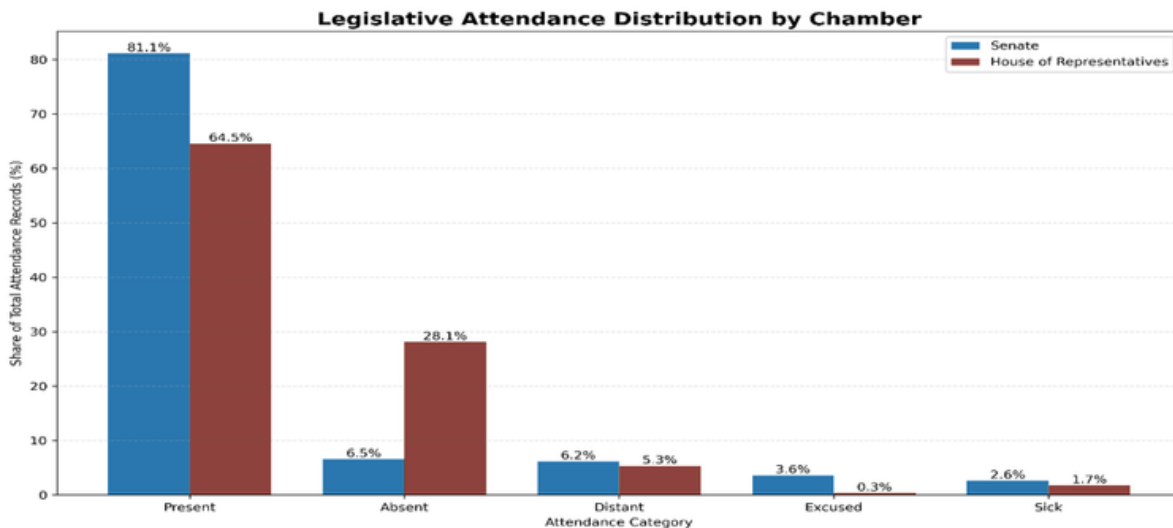
3.0. Methodology

During the Period, the House of Representatives held Fifty-five (55) plenary sessions and 13 Executive Session while the Liberian Senate held sixty (60) plenary sessions respectively. InfoQuest Monitors observed all of the plenary sessions held by the Liberian Senate and the House of Representatives. InfoQuest monitors were recruited and trained from member's organizations and Institutions. Monitors were recruited, trained and deployed to systematically track attendance and absenteeism, debate participation, Bills and resolutions sponsored, Committee reports and activities, Oversight appearances, legislative communications, procedure compliance, and transparency and inclusion indicators. Essentially, the report covers key monitoring activities relating to Legislative functions (Oversight, Representation and Lawmaking) as well as institutional governance and the interplay of politics and interests at the Legislature. This approach ensures that the report is grounded in verifiable data rather than perception, thereby strengthening public trust in the findings.

4.0. Plenary's Attendance Times:

The Senate recorded generally strong attendance among its top performers, with several senators present for more than 90% of all sittings, although a smaller group showed significantly lower participation. Across the 60 Senate sessions held during the period, a total of 906 present times were recorded, alongside 73 absences, 69 distant times, 40 excused absences, and 29 sick reports. In the House of Representatives, overall attendance volume was higher due to the chamber's larger membership. Attendance patterns varied widely, with some lawmakers attending all 55 sittings while others attended fewer than 20. In total, the House recorded 2,050 present times, 892 absences, 169 distant times, 10 excused absences, and 55 sick reports.

Attendance Category	Senate	House of Representatives	Senate %	House %
Present	906	2050	81.10%	64.50%
Absent	73	892	6.50%	28.10%
Distant	69	169	6.20%	5.30%
Excused	40	10	3.60%	0.30%
Sick	29	55	2.60%	1.70%



4.1. Plenary Attendance Analysis:

The 2025 attendance data reveal a Legislature sharply divided between a dedicated core of legislators and a persistently absent minority. While a commendable cohort of 17 Representatives and 19 Senators maintained attendance rates exceeding 90%, demonstrating consistent engagement with their legislative duties, a significant number of their colleagues fell far below acceptable standards, raising profound concerns about representational equity. House of Representatives attendance gap is particularly stark. At the top, several lawmakers achieved perfect or near-perfect attendance (50–55 of 55 sittings). Conversely, the bottom tier attended as few as 10 sittings (just 18%). These low performers were largely concentrated in Montserrado, Nimba, and Bomi counties. The issue extends beyond simple absences; "distant times" (meaning they were physically away from the Capitol) were notably high for Representatives Manah Bishop Johnson (26), Yekeh Kolubah (19), and Taa Wongbe (18), suggesting frequent unavailability for plenary business.

The Senate exhibits a similarly polarised pattern but with even more extreme outliers. While top Senators attended up to 56 of 60 sittings, several key figures recorded disturbingly low presence. Most critically, the data reveal an extraordinary anomaly regarding excused absences. Senators Saah H. Joseph, Edwin M. Snowe, Alex J. Tyler, and Jonathan B. Sogbie each recorded 60 excused absences the exact number of sittings held in the year. Effectively, this means these four senators received official excuses for every single session of 2025, rendering their formal participation and constituency representation entirely non-existent. Additionally, Senator Samuel Kogar's 42 sick days (over 70% of the sessions) highlight severe personal or institutional challenges that severely limit his ability to legislate.

These patterns of chronic absenteeism and excessive excusals are not merely administrative inconveniences; they constitute a fundamental operational failure. When many lawmakers, especially those with 100% excused absences, miss plenary sessions, the Legislature's ability to debate robustly, oversee thoroughly, and represent equitably is severely compromised.

Legislative Attendance Engagement Tables

Figure 11A. Top 10 Most Engaged Representatives by Attendance

Rank	Name	County	Sessions Attended	Total Sessions	Attendance Rate	Attendance Status
1	Hon. Thomas P. Fallah	Lofa	55	55	100.00%	Full Attendance
2	Hon. P. Mike Jury	Maryland	55	55	100.00%	Full Attendance
3	Hon. James M. Kolleh	Bong	55	55	100.00%	Full Attendance
4	Hon. Ivar Kokulo Jones	Margibi	55	55	100.00%	Full Attendance
5	Hon. Alex J. Grant	Rivercess	55	55	100.00%	Full Attendance
6	Hon. Isaac B. Cholo-play Wuo	River Gee	54	55	98.20%	Very High Attendance
7	Hon. Alexander Poure	River Gee	54	55	98.20%	Very High Attendance
8	Hon. Jahkpakpa Obediah	Bomi	54	55	98.20%	Very High Attendance
9	Hon. Julie Fatorma Wiah	Lofa	54	55	98.20%	Very High Attendance
10	Hon. Thomas Romeo Quioh	Sinoe	54	55	98.20%	Very High Attendance

Figure 11B. Bottom 10 Least Engaged Representatives by Attendance

Rank	Lawmakers	County	Sessions Attended	Total Sessions	Attendance Rate	Attendance Status
1	Hon. Roland Opee Cooper	Margibi	10–15	55	18.2%–27.3%	Very Low Attendance
2	Hon. Manah Bishop Johnson	Bomi	10–15	55	18.2%–27.3%	Very Low Attendance
3	Hon. Taa Z. Wongbe	Nimba	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
4	Hon. Kortor Kwagru	Nimba	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
5	Hon. Josiah M. Cole	Bong	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
6	Hon. Musa Hassan Bility	Nimba	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
7	Hon. Bintu Massaley	Grand Cape Mount	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
8	Hon. Edward Papay Flomo	Montserrado	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
9	Hon. Yekeh Y. Kolubah	Montserrado	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance
10	Hon. J. Fonati Koffa	Grand Kru	15–20	55	27.3%–36.4%	Low Attendance

Figure 12A. Top 10 Most Engaged Senators by Attendance

Rank	Name	County	Sessions Attended	Total Sessions	Attendance Rate	Attendance Status
1	Sen. Nyonblee Karnga Lawrence	Grand Bassa	56	60	93.30%	Very High Attendance
2	Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon	Montserrado	56	60	93.30%	Very High Attendance
3	Sen. Gbehzohngar M. Findley	Grand Bassa	56	60	93.30%	Very High Attendance
4	Sen. Augustine S. Chea	Sinoe	56	60	93.30%	Very High Attendance
5	Sen. J. Gbleh-bo Brown	Maryland	55	60	91.70%	Very High Attendance
6	Sen. Dabah Varpillah	Grand Cape Mount	54	60	90.00%	High Attendance
7	Sen. Prince K. Moyer	Bong	54	60	90.00%	High Attendance
8	Sen. Thomas Y. Nimely	Grand Gedeh	54	60	90.00%	High Attendance
9	Sen. Joseph K. Jallah	Lofa	53	60	88.30%	High Attendance
10	Sen. Emmanuel Nuquay	Margibi	53	60	88.30%	High Attendance

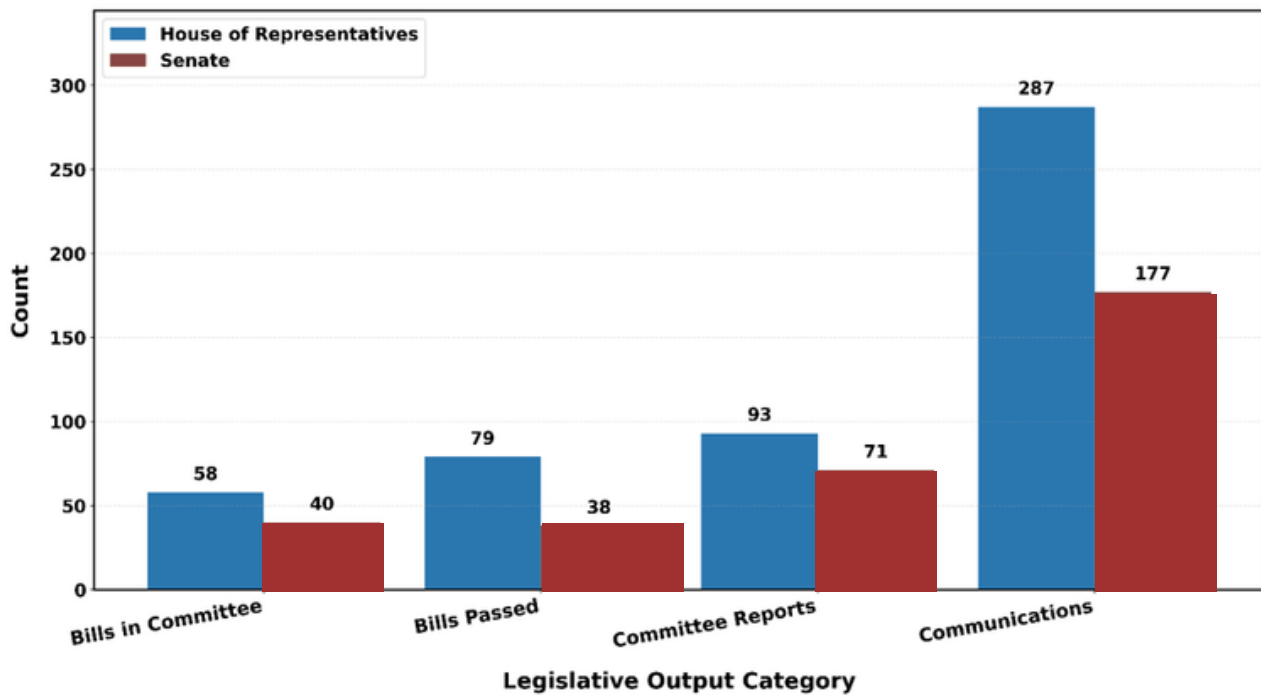
Figure 12B. Bottom Least Engaged Senators by Attendance

Rank	Name	County	Sessions Attended	Total Sessions	Attendance Rate	Attendance Status
1	Sen. Saah H. Joseph	Montserrado	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
2	Sen. Simeon B. Taylor	Grand Cape Mount	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
3	Sen. Samuel Kogar	Nimba	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
4	Sen. Nathaniel F.	Margibi	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
5	Sen. Alex J. Tyler	Bomi	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
6	Sen. Crayton Duncan	Not specified	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
7	Sen. Edwin Snowe	Not specified	25-30	60	41.7%–50.0%	Low Attendance
8	Sen. Francis Dopoh	River Gee	30-35	60	50.0%–58.3%	Mode. -Low Attendance

Lawmaking Accountability

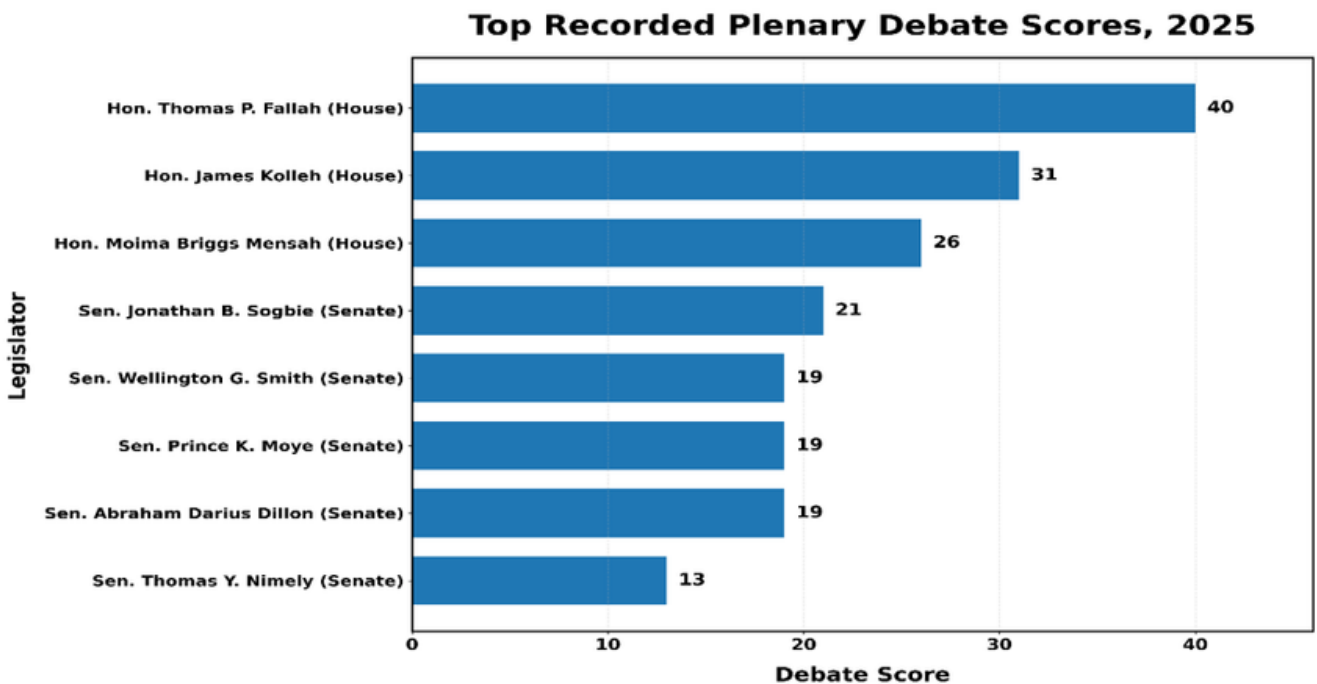
Lawmaking accountability during the period reflects persistent challenges in legislative productivity, with both chambers experiencing significant delays in the progression of bills beyond committee review. In the House of Representatives, 58 bills remained in committee while only 79 were passed, and in the Senate, 40 bills remained in committee with just 38 passed. With the total of 117 passage 14 bills were veto by the President. This substantial backlog demonstrates that most legislative proposals did not advance to plenary consideration. Committee oversight outputs further reveal uneven performance: the Senate produced 71 committee reports compared to the House's 93, while the House issued 287 communications against the Senate's 177. These patterns point to structural bottlenecks that continue to hinder the Legislature's ability to process bills efficiently and conduct robust oversight, resulting in consistently low lawmaking output across both chambers. Among the total bills passed, 42 originated from the executive Branch/Office of the President OF Liberia was passed by the legislature.

Legislative Outputs by Chamber, 2025

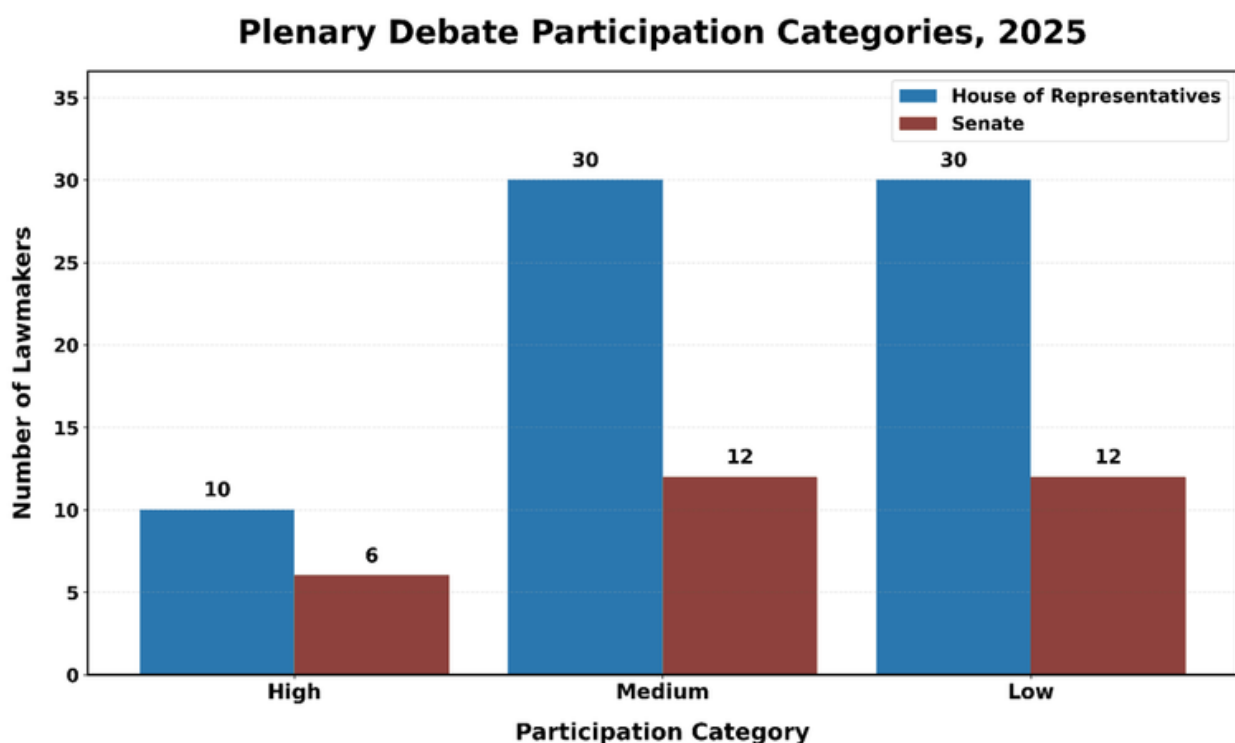


4.1.1. Plenary Debate

Plenary debate remains a central measure of legislative engagement, and the assessment for the period shows a highly uneven distribution of participation across both chambers. A small group of lawmakers accounted for the majority of contributions, while many others participated infrequently or not at all, resulting in significant disparities in deliberative engagement. In the Senate, the highest debate performers were led by **Sen. Jonathan B. Sogbie**, who recorded the chamber's top score of 21, followed by **Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon (19)**, **Sen. Prince K. Moya (19)**, **Sen. Wellington G. Smith (19)**, and **Sen. Thomas Y. Nimely (13)**. At the lower end, several senators, including **Sen. Gbehzohngar Findley**, **Sen. Crayton Duncan**, **Sen. Dabah Varpillah**, and **Sen. Francis Dopoh** recorded the lowest score of 1. In the House of Representatives, **Hon. Thomas P. Fallah** achieved the highest debate score with **40**, while a significant number of lawmakers including Hon. Abu Bana Kamara, Hon. Isaac Bannie, Hon. Bintu Massaley, Hon. Mohammed Dosii, Hon. Sam Jallah, Hon. Roland Cooper, Hon. Taa Wongbe, Hon. Zinnah Norman, and Hon. Mustapha Waritay recorded **zero** debate contributions.



Overall, the distribution of debate activity classified as High, Medium, and Low showed that the **House** recorded **10 high performers**, **30 medium performers**, and **30 low performers**, while the **Senate** recorded **6 high**, **12 medium**, and **12 low performers**. These patterns underscore the need for targeted capacity-building in legislative debate, policy analysis, and effective communication to strengthen the quality and inclusiveness of parliamentary deliberations.



4.1.2. Introduction of Bills by Legislators

A review of legislative activity shows that several Representatives were active in proposing or sponsoring bills during the period assessed. Those with the highest number include Thomas Romeo Quioh (6), Hon. Ernest Manseah (5), Julie F. Wiah (5), Hon. James Kolleh (5), Hon. Mustaph Warity (4), Hon. Gbessie Fieka (4), Hon. Robert F. Womba (3), Hon. Marie Johnson (3), Hon. Alfred Flomo (2), Hon. Sumo Mulbah (2), Hon. Prescilla A. Cooper (2), Augustine Chiewolo (2), Hon. Taa Wongbe (2), Hon. Alex Noah (2), Hon. Nyahn Flomo (2), Hon. Steve Tequah (1), Hon. Alex Poure (1), Hon. Bernard Benson (1), Hon. Dixie Seboe (1), Hon. Roland Opee Cooper (1), Hon. Jerimiah Soka (1), Hon. Gbessie Fieka (1), Hon. Sekou Kanneh (1), Hon. Clarence Banks (1), Hon. Augustine Chiewolo (1), Hon. Anthony Williams (1), Hon. Emmanuel Dahn (1), Hon. Jerimiah Soka (1), Hon. Isaac Wuo (1), Hon. Nyahn Flomo (1), Hon. Prince Toles (1), and Jacob Deebee (1). Karnga Lawrence (4), Sen. Jonathan Boye-Charles Sogbie (3), followed by Sen. Gbehzohngar M. Findley (1), Sen. Edwin M. Snowe (1), Sen. Francis Dopoh (2), Sen. Joseph K. Jallah (1), Sen. Abraham Among Senators, the most active sponsors were Sen. Nya D. Twayen Jr. (8), Sen. Simeon Taylor (6), Sen. Nyonblee Darius Dillon (1), Sen. Numene T. H. Bartekwa (2), and Hon. Sam Kogar (2).

5.0. OVERSIGHT FUNCTION ACCOUNTABILITY RATING

Effective legislative oversight is a cornerstone of democratic governance and a constitutional responsibility of the Liberian Legislature. This function ensures that public resources are used efficiently, transparently, and in alignment with national priorities. However, during the period under review, the Legislature demonstrated significant weaknesses in enforcing compliance with statutory reporting requirements.

Despite one hundred and twenty (120) Government Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs) receiving direct budgetary allocations, fewer than 10% submitted their mandatory quarterly budget performance reports to the Legislature. This extremely low compliance rate reflects a systemic breakdown in oversight enforcement, undermining transparency and accountability across the public sector.

Only the following MACs submitted their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Quarter Budget Performance Reports:

- Ministry of Post and Telecommunications
- Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC)
- Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA)
- National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority (NaFAA)
- National Road Fund (NRF)
- Liberia Maritime Authority (LiMA)

The fact that only six (6) institutions complied representing less than ten percent of all MACs—demonstrates that the Legislature’s oversight mechanisms remain weak, overly haggled, and inconsistently applied. Without timely and comprehensive budget performance reports, lawmakers are unable to:

- Assess whether public funds are being used for their intended purposes
- Evaluate service-delivery outcomes
- Detect misuse, waste, or inefficiencies
- Hold MACs accountable for non-performance

This oversight gap severely limits the Legislature’s ability to monitor government operations and ensure fiscal discipline.

5.1 Implications of Weak Oversight

The Legislature’s failure to enforce reporting requirements has several consequences:

- Reduced transparency in public financial management
- Limited accountability for MACs receiving substantial budgetary allocations
- Weak evidence base for legislative decision-making
- Increased risk of misappropriation, waste, and poor service delivery
- Erosion of public trust in the Legislature’s ability to perform its constitutional duties

5.2 Strengthening Legislative Oversight

To improve compliance and enhance the Legislature’s oversight function, the following actions are recommended:

- Enforce statutory reporting obligations with clear timelines
- Introduce sanctions for MACs that fail to submit quarterly reports
- Publish compliance reports to promote transparency
- Strengthen the Legislature’s internal capacity for budget analysis
- Establish a dedicated Budget Oversight and Compliance Unit
- Require MACs to present quarterly reports in public hearings

Until these reforms are implemented, the Legislature’s oversight role will remain compromised, and the integrity of public financial management will continue to be undermined.

Oversight Function: Confirmation Proceedings and Public Hearings

In addition to its responsibility for monitoring budget execution and ensuring compliance with statutory reporting requirements, the Legislature also exercises critical oversight through confirmation proceedings and public hearings. These processes form an essential part of democratic accountability, ensuring that senior government officials, commissioners, judges, and agency heads meet the standards of competence, integrity, and public service required for their respective offices. During the period under review, several committees of the Legislature conducted confirmation hearings for a wide range of presidential nominees across key sectors of government. These proceedings provided an opportunity for lawmakers to scrutinise nominees' qualifications, assess their understanding of institutional mandates, and evaluate their commitment to transparency, accountability, and effective service delivery.

5.3 Confirmation Proceedings

Committee on Internal Affairs

The Committee reviewed nominees for senior administrative and local governance positions within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and local government structures:

- Hon. Madam Fatima Binta Sieleaf – Deputy Minister for Urban Affairs-Designate
- Hon. Mr. F. Dadeh Harper – Assistant Minister for Administration-Designate
- Hon. Thomas Fallah – Commissioner, Foya Administrative District-Designate
- Hon. Rev. John W. Smith – City Mayor-Designate, Marshall City, Margibi County

Committee on Autonomous Commissions & Agencies

Nominees for key governance and tourism institutions appeared before the Committee:

- Hon. Matthew B. Kollie, Sr. – Commissioner for National Integrity System-Designate, Governance Commission
- Hon. Cytirus K. Kbay – Commissioner for Engagement, National Identity & Visioning Mandate-Designate, Governance Commission
- Hon. Princess Eva Cooper – Director General-Designate, Liberia National Tourism Authority
- Hon. Atty. Dogba K. Norris, Jr. – Deputy Director General for Planning, Research & Development-Designate, Liberia National Tourism Authority

Committee on Executive

- Hon. Samuel A. Stevquoah – Minister-Designate, Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Hon. George G. Solo – Ambassador to Italy-Designate, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Committee on Judiciary, Human Rights, Claims & Petitions

The Committee reviewed nominees for prosecutorial and judicial leadership roles:

- Hon. Cllr. Daniel T-Kay Dweh – County Attorney, River Gee County-Designate
- Hon. Atty. E. Wilkins Nah – County Attorney, Grand Gedeh County-Designate
- Hon. Atty. Martin M. Tumoe – County Attorney, Rivercess County-Designate
- Hon. Cllr. Bornor M. Varmah – Chairperson-Designate, Law Reform Commission

Additional nominees under the Ministry of Justice included:

- Hon. Atty. Teklo M. Grigsby II – Director-Designate
- Hon. Varney A. Sheriff – Deputy Director-Designate
- Hon. Dr. Stephen D. Paye – Probation & Parole Administrator-Designate, Witness Protection Unit

Committee on Hydrocarbon, Energy & Environment

- Hon. Fabiah Michael Lai – CEO/President-Designate, National Oil Company of Liberia

Committee on Transport

- Hon. John Z. Buway – Deputy Managing Director for Administration-Designate, Liberia Airport Authority

Committee on Internal Affairs, Governance & Reconciliation

- Hon. Amos T. F. Kemeyah – County Relieving Commissioner-Designate, Lofa County

Committee on Judiciary

Judicial nominees for specialized courts included:

- Hon. Cllr. William G. Capehert – Traffic Court Judge-Designate, Bong County
- Hon. Cllr. Eric Morlu – Debt Court Judge-Designate
- Hon. Cllr. Daniel D. Dolokelen – Debt Court Judge-Designate
- Hon. Atty. Anthony Kollie – Criminal Court “E” Judge-Designate, Lofa County
- Hon. Cllr. Rennie O. Moses – Criminal Court “E” Judge-Designate, Grand Gedeh County

Committee on Defense

- Hon. Nelsco A. Wolo – Deputy Commissioner General for Administration-Designate, Liberia Immigration Service

These confirmation hearings represent a critical component of legislative oversight, ensuring that key public institutions are led by individuals capable of upholding the rule of law, strengthening governance, and delivering essential services.

5.4 Public Hearings

Public hearings remain an important mechanism through which the Legislature engages citizens, civil society, and stakeholders in national decision-making. During the period under review, the Legislature conducted several high-profile hearings, including:

National Budget Hearings:

The Legislature commenced scrutiny of the 2025 Draft National Budget, totaling approximately US\$851.76 million. These hearings provided a platform for ministries, agencies, and commissions to justify their allocations, outline priorities, and respond to concerns regarding fiscal discipline, transparency, and performance.

Review of the ArcelorMittal Liberia Concession Agreement

Lawmakers examined proposed amendments to the ArcelorMittal Liberia concession, focusing on:

- Revenue implications
- Community benefits
- Employment commitments
- Environmental safeguards

National Road Concession Review

The Legislature also reviewed national road concession proposals, assessing:

- Financing arrangements
- Implementation timelines
- Contractor performance
- Long-term infrastructure sustainability

These public hearings demonstrate the Legislature's role in facilitating open dialogue on major national issues. However, the effectiveness of these engagements remains closely tied to the Legislature's.

Information Management and Accessibility

Effective information management is central to legislative transparency and accountability. During the period under review, the Legislature demonstrated a generally organized internal system for managing records. Responsibility for documentation was shared between the Legislative Information Office and the Office of the Chief Clerk, with each office maintaining records for four plenary sessions. Voting records, attendance logs, and participation data were available for all nine observed sessions and could be accessed upon request by media institutions and civil society organizations. A functional bill-tracking system also existed and operated consistently, allowing for the recording of legislative inputs and the monitoring of bill progression.

Despite these internal strengths, significant transparency gaps were evident in the Legislature's public-facing information systems. The official legislative website was not updated with relevant data, including bills, committee reports, session summaries, or voting records, across all nine observed periods. This lack of timely updates limits public access to essential legislative information and weakens external oversight.

Furthermore, critical financial information such as the Legislature's budget, allowances, travel expenditures, and salary structures remained unavailable to the public throughout the review period. The absence of publicly accessible financial disclosures undermines confidence in the Legislature's commitment to openness and makes it difficult for citizens, researchers, and accountability actors to assess the institution's stewardship of public resources.

Strengthening information accessibility will require:

- Regular updates to the Legislature's website
- Publication of all bills, reports, and voting records
- Public disclosure of legislative financial information
- A dedicated digital transparency unit to manage online content

Until these reforms are implemented, the Legislature's information-management practices will continue to fall short of international standards for openness and public accountability.

5.5 Monitoring Observations and Transparency Challenges

The monitoring period revealed several structural and operational weaknesses that continue to undermine the Legislature's commitment to transparency, accountability, and public accessibility. These challenges cut across information management, audit compliance, reporting obligations, and the conduct of legislative concern.

5.5.1 Website Functionality and Public Information Access

The Legislature maintains an official website and active social media presence, particularly on Facebook. However, the website lacks real-time updates, with no records of daily plenary sessions, committee deliberations, or legislative outputs across all observed periods. The InfoQuest Monitoring Team visited the website regularly, yet no session reports, bills, or voting records were posted.

This failure to populate the website with timely information significantly limits public access to legislative activities and weakens external oversight by civil society and the media.

5.5.2 Absence of Legislative Audits

Although the Legislature receives substantial public funding annually, it has not been audited by the General Auditing Commission (GAC) for several years. Calls for an audit most notably by Sen. Abraham Darius Dillon have been repeatedly ignored by the Legislative Leadership.

The removal of former Speaker Hon. J. Fonati Koffa was partly justified by the absence of an audit. However, despite commitments by the new Speaker, Hon. Richard Nagbe Koon, no audit has been conducted to date. This persistent refusal to undergo financial scrutiny undermines public trust and raises concerns about fiscal accountability.

5.5.3 Lack of Voting Technology

The Legislature does not utilize an electronic voting system. The absence of a digital voting machine prevents stakeholders including civil society organizations and the media from independently verifying how lawmakers vote on critical national issues. This gap significantly limits transparency and makes it difficult to track individual accountability in legislative decision-making.

While the Senate records votes through a manual hand-count that identifies the names of Senators an approach that offers slightly more transparency the House of Representatives does not provide comparable visibility. As a result, both chambers fall short of modern democratic standards for open, verifiable, and accountable voting procedures.

5.5.4 Failure to Report on International Representation

Lawmakers who attend ECOWAS Parliamentary Sessions and other international engagements do not submit written reports to plenary upon their return. This omission creates an information vacuum and fuels public speculation that such engagements may not be advancing Liberia's interests. Reporting is essential for transparency, institutional memory, and policy follow-through.

5.5.5 Excessive Use of Secret Sessions

The culture of Executive Sessions (secret sessions) has become increasingly common in both chambers. Critical agenda items of public interest are frequently moved into closed-door discussions, limiting public access to information and weakening democratic accountability. This practice contradicts the principles of open governance and restricts citizens' right to know.

5.5.6 Limited Access to Committee Meetings

Aside from public hearings, most committee meetings remain closed to the public. Civil society monitors, including InfoQuest observers, face significant challenges accessing committee deliberations. This lack of openness restricts public participation and reduces opportunities for evidence-based advocacy.

5.6 Gender Participation and Representation

While attendance data provides one dimension of legislative engagement, a deeper analysis reveals that female lawmakers remain significantly underrepresented in substantive participation, including debates, bill sponsorship, and agenda-setting.

5.6.1 Debate Participation and Gender Gaps

Using the Legislature's debate-performance data, the monitoring team observed that:

- Female lawmakers contributed to debates in fewer sessions overall, often speaking only once or twice when they did participate.
- In two sessions, only three to five women contributed; in most sessions, no female lawmaker spoke at all.
- Debate scores among women were consistently lower than those of their male counterparts:

Among the highest debate performers in the House—Hon. Thomas P. Fallah (40), Hon. James Kolleh (31), and Hon. Moima Briggs Mensah (26) is the only female lawmaker who appears in the top tier.

Female debate scores generally ranged between 5 and 12, with none exceeding 14, compared to male scores reaching 40.

This disparity indicates that women are not only fewer in number but also less empowered to influence legislative discourse, even when present.

5.6.2 Implications for Representational Equity

The limited participation of women in debates and the scarcity of bills addressing women, youth, and minority groups create a reinforcing cycle of exclusion:

- Legislative priorities are shaped predominantly by male lawmakers.
- Issues affecting women, youth, and marginalized communities receive minimal attention.
- Only one bill during the period directly addressed youth and social protection, and only one bill targeted women or minority groups.
- Six bills were categorized as “others,” offering little clarity on whether they addressed gender or minority concerns.

This pattern reflects a structural failure of representative democracy, where significant segments of the population lack legislative champions to articulate their needs and advance their interests.

5.6.3 Consequences for Policy Outcomes

The inward focus on public-sector governance and political administration rather than social policy suggests a Legislature more concerned with institutional matters than with the lived realities of ordinary citizens. Without stronger female participation and more inclusive bill sponsorship, policy blind spots will persist, particularly in areas such as:

- Gender-based violence
- Women's economic empowerment
- Youth employment
- Social protection
- Minority rights.

Assessment of the Legislature's Leaderships in terms of Legislative Openness)

InfoQuest analysis of Legislative Openness of the Liberia Legislature as POOR. Specific emphasis was made on the House of Representatives as the least transparent unit of the Liberian Legislature. The House of a Yea & Nay Votes and countless secret Sitzings. Even though, efforts by the Liberian Senate to introduce open voting system as a positive step towards strengthening legislative transparency and accountability in Liberia, the inadequacy of due diligence process during confirmation hearings was highlighted.

Moreover, the leaderships are Overly Haggled and seemed as an expanded phase of Executive Branch of government. Records showed that over 74% of decisions made by the legislature are Executive interests based over Public Goods.

Whilst, collaboration and coordination are governance key elements the Liberia Legislature must exercise its three constitutional functions independently without been overly bargained with Executive related interests over Public Goods. The Legislature leaderships were seemed overly influenced by the Executive and lack of the political-will to independently function in accordance with best democratic practices for a Balance of Power (BOP) governance system that strengthen nationwide growth and development.

Conclusion

The Legislature is procedurally functional but substantively failing. Although it maintains order, follows formal rules, and consistently meets quorum, these procedural strengths do not translate into effective governance. The institution continues to fall short in its core democratic responsibilities oversight, representation, and independent lawmaking creating a widening gap between process and impact that undermines public accountability.

Chronic absenteeism has deepened this crisis, with only 5% of Representatives achieving top attendance grades and several Senators excused from every session, effectively disenfranchising large segments of the population. Legislative independence is further weakened by executive dominance, as more than one-third of all bills passed originate from the Presidency, leaving the Legislature reactive rather than proactive in fulfilling its constitutional mandate.

Oversight remains weak, opaque, and unenforced: fewer than 10% of government agencies comply with mandatory reporting requirements, committees operate behind closed doors, secret sessions are overused, and financial audits are avoided entirely. Gender exclusion is structural and self-perpetuating, with women marginalized not only in numbers but also in substantive participation, debate contributions, bill sponsorship, and leadership roles resulting in legislative outputs that insufficiently reflect the needs of women, youth, and minorities. Ultimately, without genuine political will, reform will remain cosmetic.

The Legislature already possesses the constitutional tools to enforce attendance, demand reports, strengthen transparency, and open its proceedings; its failure to use them reflects a lack of collective resolve rather than a lack of capacity. Meaningful change requires a renewed commitment to accountability, inclusion, and public service.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Strengthen Legislative Transparency and Public Responsiveness:** The Legislature should ensure timely publication of plenary reports, voting records, committee outputs, and budget information on its official website and social media platforms. This will enhance public trust, improve external scrutiny, and close the current information gap between lawmakers and citizens.
2. **Conduct Mandatory, Public Financial Audits of the Legislature:** The General Auditing Commission should carry out regular, comprehensive audits of the Legislature's financial operations including budget allocations, allowances, travel expenditures, and administrative spending and publish all findings to end the culture of financial secrecy.
3. **Modernize Voting and Information Systems:** The Legislature should deploy electronic voting technology to ensure transparent, verifiable voting records. A dedicated digital unit should update the Legislature's website within 24 hours of each session with bills, reports, and voting outcomes.
4. **Enforce Strict Attendance Standards with Public Accountability:** Adopt a mandatory attendance threshold (e.g., 70%) for all legislators, with financial penalties or public sanctions for non-compliance. Weekly attendance records should be published to allow constituents to hold their representatives accountable.
5. **Strengthen Oversight Through Enforcement and Transparency:** The Legislature should enforce compliance with citations, compel Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions to submit quarterly performance reports, and apply contempt sanctions where necessary. All oversight hearings should be held in public to promote transparency.
6. **Limit Secret (Executive) Sessions to Genuine Security Matters:** Closed-door sessions should be restricted to issues involving national security. Matters of public interest must remain open to citizens and the media to prevent misuse of secrecy provisions.
7. **Require Written Reports from Lawmakers on International Assignments:** Legislators representing Liberia at ECOWAS and other regional or international bodies should be mandated to submit quarterly written reports detailing activities, outcomes, and benefits to the Liberian people.

8. **Unclog Committee Bottlenecks and Strengthen Expertise:** Committee assignments—especially for specialized committees such as Judiciary, Public Accounts, Hydrocarbon, and Health should be based on minimum subject-matter expertise. Committees should operate under strict timelines (e.g., 60-day review deadlines) and be supported by professional staff to reduce backlogs.
9. **Improve Gender Participation and Representation:** The Legislature should adopt measures to increase women’s participation in debates, bill sponsorship, and committee leadership roles. Establishing a Gender and Inclusion Desk and mentorship programmes for female lawmakers will help close the current gender gap.
10. **Expand Public Access to Committee Proceedings:** Legislative committees should open more meetings to the public beyond formal hearings. Greater access will promote transparency, encourage civic engagement, and allow civil society monitors to observe deliberations.



InfoQuest Website
<http://infoquestlr.org>