



BILL ESSENTIAL NO. 10 OF 2025-2026 1st Session, 13th Parliament

BILL ESSENTIALS

THE COPYRIGHT (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2026

Date Introduced: **January 27, 2026**

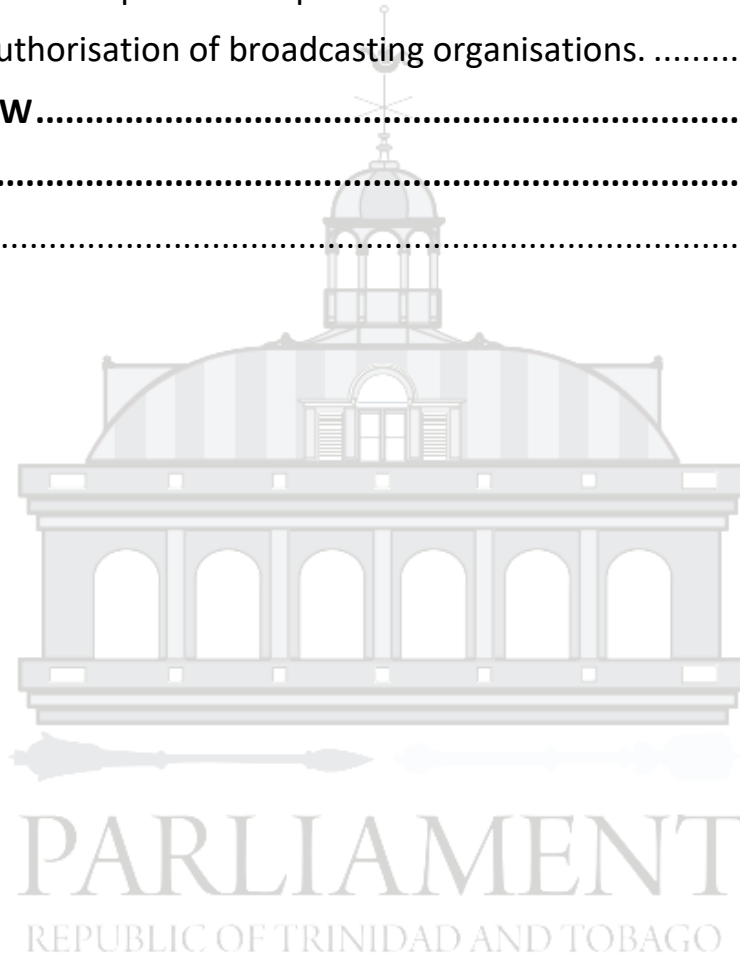
House: **Senate**




Introduced by: **The Minister of Land and Legal Affairs** Senate Bill No. 01 of 2026



TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND.....	3
KEY FEATURES OF THE BILL.....	3
Duration of copyright protection	3
Extension of protection periods for performers and sound recordings	4
Acts requiring authorisation of broadcasting organisations.	4
COMPARATIVE LAW	5
REFERENCES.....	6
Key Legislation	6



1. The **Copyright (Amendment) Bill, 2026** (hereinafter referred to as the “Bill”) was introduced in the Senate by the Honourable Saddam Hosein, MP, Minister of Land and Legal Affairs and Minister in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, on January 27, 2026.
2. The Bill proposes amendments to the **Copyright Act, Chap. 82:80** (hereinafter referred to as the “Act”) to:
 -  extend the term of protection for copyright¹ and neighbouring rights² for authors (including works of joint authorship), performers, and producers of sound recordings;
 -  extend the term of protection for moral rights³ for authors (including works of joint authorship) and performers; and
 -  clarify the computation of certain protection periods to ensure consistency with other provisions of the Act.

KEY FEATURES OF THE BILL

Duration of copyright protection

3. **Clause 3** of the Bill seeks to amend **section 19** of the Act, which governs the duration of copyright and moral rights, by increasing the period of protection for author’s rights from **fifty (50) years to seventy (70) years** after the author’s death in cases of single authorship. In cases of joint ownership, the clause will extend the protection of copyright and moral rights from **fifty (50) years to seventy (70) years** after the death of the last surviving author.

¹ Pursuant to **section 5** of the Act, copyright is a property right which subsists in literary and artistic works that are original intellectual creations in the literary and artistic domain including books, speeches, dramatic works, musical works, photographic works etc.

² Pursuant to **section 20** of the Act, neighbouring rights are property rights which subsist in performance, sound recordings and broadcasts. It gives performers and producers control over the use, reproduction and exploitation of performances and sound recordings separate from the rights of the original owner.

³ According to **section 18** of the Act, moral rights include the right of the author to have or not have his name indicated on copies of his work in connection to public use (paternity right), to use a pseudonym, or to object to any distortion, mutilation or other modification or derogatory action in relation to his work which would be prejudicial to his honour or reputation (integrity right).

Extension of protection periods for performers and sound recordings

4. **Clauses 4 to 7** of the Bill seek to amend the Act to extend the duration of protection for the moral and neighbouring rights of performers and producers by increasing the applicable protection period from **fifty (50) years to seventy (70) years**.
5. The table below sets out the specific clauses, sections amended, rights affected, and the applicable basis for calculating the extended protection period.

Extension of Protection Periods under Clauses 4–7

Clause	Section Amended	Right Affected	Computation of 70 Year Period
4	19(A)	Moral rights of performers	End of the year in which the performance was fixed ; or, if not fixed, end of the year in which the performance occurred
5	21(4)	Neighbouring rights of performers	End of the year in which the performance was fixed ; or, if not fixed, end of the year in which the performance occurred
6	22(2)	Neighbouring rights of producers of sound recordings	End of the year of publication ; or, if not published, end of the year of fixation
7	23(4)	Right to equitable remuneration for use of sound recordings	End of the year of publication ; or, if not published, end of the year of fixation

Acts requiring authorisation of broadcasting organisations.

6. **Clause 8** of the Bill provides amendments to **section 24(2)** of the Act, which sets out the duration of protection for the exclusive rights of broadcasting organisations in relation to their broadcasts. Previously, these rights were protected until the end of “the fiftieth calendar year following the year in which the broadcast first takes place.”
7. The amendment **retains the fifty (50) year period**, but provides that it is **computed from the end of the year in which the broadcast first takes place**.

8. The **Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886)** (hereinafter referred to as the “Convention”) establishes an international framework for the protection of literary and artistic works and the rights of their authors.⁴ **Article 7(1)** provides that the term of protection is the life of the author plus **fifty (50) years after death**.⁵ However, the Convention does not restrict signatory States to this period, as **Article 7(6)** expressly permits States to grant longer terms of protection under their domestic laws.⁶
9. Although one hundred and eighty-two (182) States have signed the Convention,⁷ not all apply the above-mentioned fifty (50) year term, with many jurisdictions opting for extended periods of protection. Trinidad and Tobago is a signatory to the Berne Convention and is therefore entitled, under the Convention, to grant a longer period of protection.
10. In this regard, several other signatory States have exercised the discretion afforded by **Article 7(6)** of the Convention to provide for longer terms of protection under their domestic laws. For example, Mexico provides copyright protection for the life of the author plus one hundred (100) years, while Guatemala provides protection for the life of the author plus seventy-five (75) years.⁸
11. Similarly, comparative practice within the Commonwealth Caribbean reflects a range of extended protection periods. Notably, Antigua and Barbuda, and Saint Kitts and Nevis provide for copyright protection lasting for the life of the author plus fifty (50) years. Dominica extends protection for the life of the author plus seventy (70) years, while Saint Vincent and the Grenadines provides protection for the life of the author plus seventy-five (75) years.⁹

⁴ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), ‘Summary of the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886)’, https://www.wipo.int/en/web/treaties/ip/berne/summary_berne

⁵ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), ‘Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (as amended on September 28, 1979)’, https://www.wipo.int/wipolex/en/text/283698#P127_22000.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Intellectual Property Rights Office (IPRO), ‘Berne Convention countries’ https://intellectualpropertyrightsoffice.org/berne_convention/

⁸ World Population Review, ‘Copyright length by country 2026’, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/copyright-length-by-country>.

⁹ Ibid.

Key Legislation



[Copyright Act, Chap 82:80](#)



[Copyright \(Amendment\) Act, 2020](#)



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