



**JOINT STATEMENT By: Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (Bersih), Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS), Institute for Political Reform and Democracy (REFORM), Project Stability and Accountability for Malaysia (Projek SAMA) and Rasuah Busters**

**5 March 2025**

**Assurance on More Improvements in the PSA 2025 Bill Needed**

We would like to register our utmost appreciation for Prime Minister YAB Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Institutional Reforms and Law Minister YB Dato' Seri Azalina Othman Said for promising some changes, such as express provision for Opposition MPs in the Parliamentary Service Council (MPP), that we have proposed in our statement yesterday morning and on February 28, 2025. We also thank all the MPs who have spoken up vigorously on the matter, among others, the Members of Parliament of Subang, Indera Mahkota, Bangi and Tasek Gelugor, who quoted our statements extensively.

Nevertheless, from the speeches by the PM and the Minister, and the subsequent debate, we are concerned that there are important points in the PSA bill that are not being discussed and addressed.

We urge the MPs who are scheduled to debate the bill today would take up the following three points and urge the minister to refer the bill to a Parliamentary Special Select Committee (PSSC) as per our suggestion. If not, then Dato' Seri Azalina Othman Said should give further assurance in her concluding speech today that the government is committed to taking necessary measures, as outlined in our previous statement, during the transition period to ensure the PSA has the necessary elements for an effective, well-resourced and independent Parliament.

1. The establishment of a Parliamentary Standing Committee in both the Dewan Negara and Dewan Rakyat (a joint committee) on the Administration and Financing of Parliament that would serve as an oversight mechanism for the Parliamentary Service Council. The Joint Committee would also have the power to review the allocation for parliament and propose appropriate amounts to ensure adequate allocation for key parliamentary services, including the constituency development fund for members of parliament. This establishment of the joint committee would need an amendment to the current Standing Order and the PSA.
2. A provision on the Parliamentary Annual Report should be tabled in Parliament to ensure a responsible, independent, and transparent. The content of this Annual Report must be comprehensive, covering key aspects of parliamentary functions, administration, finance,



performance, and governance. This should also include the activities of Parliamentary Select Committees (PSSC) and All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs).

3. A provision imposing a duty of impartiality on Parliamentary Service staff and prohibitions against nepotism in the PSA. These would require all members of parliamentary services to act in a non-partisan manner and should not be subject to executive pressure and interference. This would also ensure the public that the appointment of members of parliamentary services is based on merit, not on other considerations. The impartiality principle should also be reflected in the PSA by removing the control of the Chief Administration on the members of parliamentary services

Our suggestion of referring the PSA to the PSSC is because MPs, in general, cannot table amendments on the bill in the Committee of the Whole House stage without a clear day's notice (in this case, on Monday) under Standing Order 57(2) of the Dewan Rakyat Standing Orders. This underlines the rigidity that prevents Government Bills from being amended and makes all robust debates in the House mere performative acts for media and public consumption without any effect on the law.

Should the PSA2025 Bill be passed today, we urge the Government to promise full and open consultation with civil society and all stakeholders in its refinement through the nucleus group in the next two years. The betterment of the PSA bill due to civil society inputs should be a first step towards deeper parliamentary reform, not the last.

We wish Dewan Rakyat a great ending to this sitting on Thursday and all MPs a blessed Ramadan month, either as Muslims or in their closer ties with all constituents. Likewise, we wish the ongoing sitting of Dewan Negara a fruitful one with more meaningful inputs on the PSA and a blessed Ramadan for all Senators.

**Released by:**

**Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections (BERSIH)**

**Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs (IDEAS)**

**Institute for Political Reform and Democracy (REFORM)**

**Project Stability and Accountability for Malaysia (Projek SAMA)**

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