CHAPTER

01

2026 National Assembly Audit:

Science, ICT, Broadcasting and Communications Committee

In-App Payment Enforcement

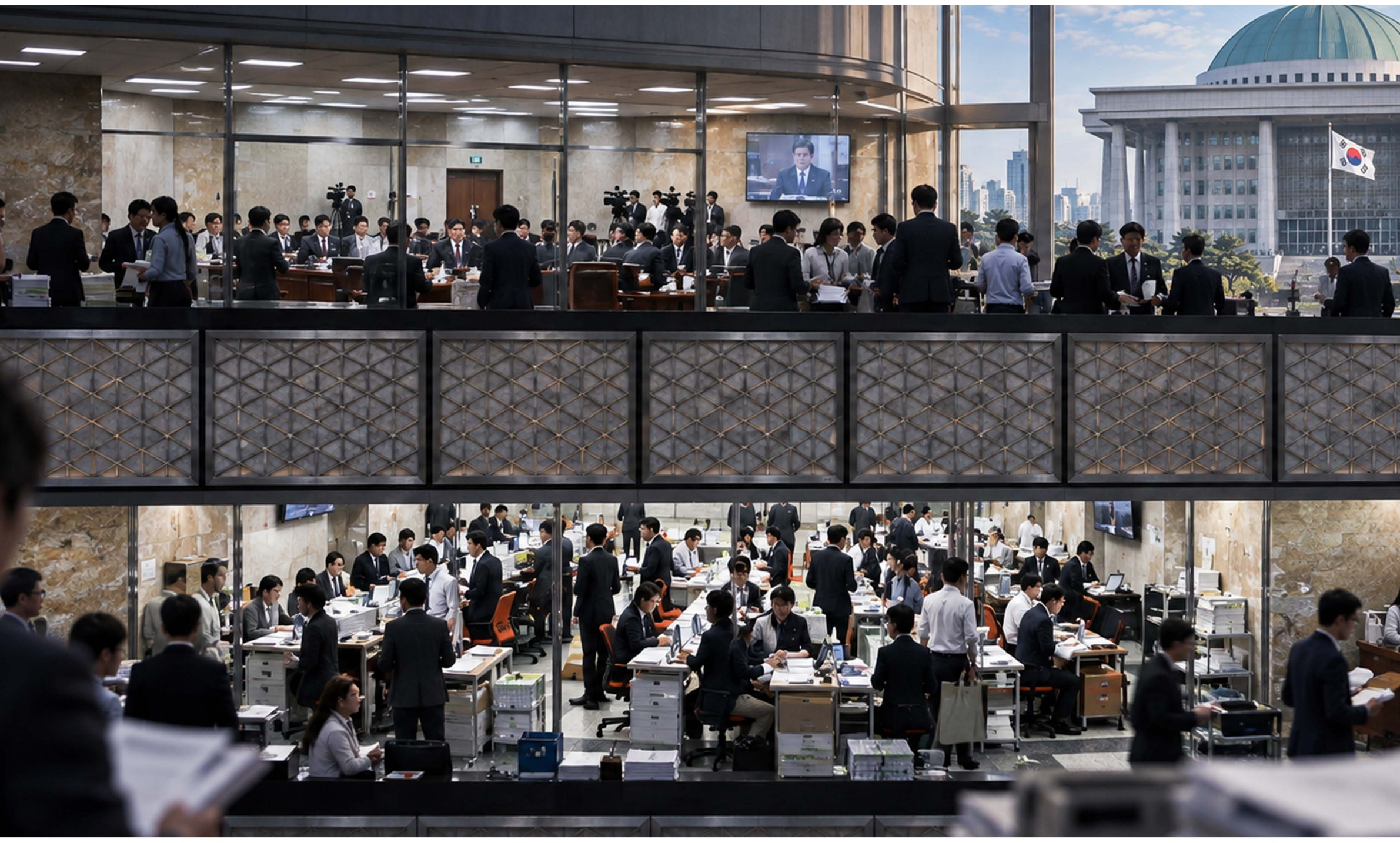
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About the Audit

Korea's annual National Assembly audit allows lawmakers to question ministries and public agencies about policy implementation. Released on August 27, the National Assembly Research Service (NARS) 2026 audit issue analysis identifies 281 issues, with suggested questions and requests for government records. This opening edition of GR Korea’s National Assembly Audit newsletter series examines in-app payment enforcement and manufacturing AI transformation The report is a guide to potential scrutiny, not an agreed committee agenda.

281
Issues Identified

National Assembly Research Service (NARS)
2026 audit analysis
(Released on August 27)



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Why It Matters

NARS examines why Korea's 2021 prohibition on forced in-app payment methods has not delivered effective enforcement. The former Korea Communications Commission (KCC) proposed penalties of up to KRW 68 billion (approximately USD 50 million) against Google and Apple in October 2023. The successor Korea Media and Communications Commission (KMCC) heard the companies' positions on August 12 but deferred its decision.

NARS also warns that platform fees and payment-processing charges can leave developers using alternative billing paying as much as, or more than they would, under in-app billing.

Key Timeline

2021

Prohibition on forced In-App payment methods takes effect

2023

former KCC proposed penalties of up to KRW 68 billion (approximately USD 50 million) against Google and Apple

2026

KMCC heard the companies' positions but deferred decision. (August 12)



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Key Policy Debate Issues

Selected NARS questions for the government, translated from the report:

01 At what stage is the enforcement process currently stalled, and why?

02 If unlawful conduct continued during the delay, on what basis will penalties be calculated?

03 Apart from penalties, has the commission required or ordered the companies to stop or correct unlawful conduct? What did it demand, and what actually improved?

04 Is there a need to introduce processing deadlines for corrective orders and penalty decisions, or a system for regularly reviewing long-pending cases?

Previous Assembly scrutiny

During the October 30, 2025 Science, ICT, Broadcasting and Communications Committee audit, Democratic Party lawmaker Lee Jeong-heon challenged the enforcement delay and Google's alternative-billing fees. The regulator's acting head said working-level preparations were nearly complete and the case would be brought before the commission once it was constituted.





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Business Implications

For app-store operators and foreign game and content publishers, the issues extend beyond the eventual penalty amount to billing choices, total transaction costs and app-review practices. NARS's questions could increase pressure for effective remedies and clearer enforcement timelines, but are not themselves new compliance requirements.

01

Billing choices

Greater scrutiny of whether alternative billing options are genuinely available and how they are presented to users and developers.

02

Total transaction costs

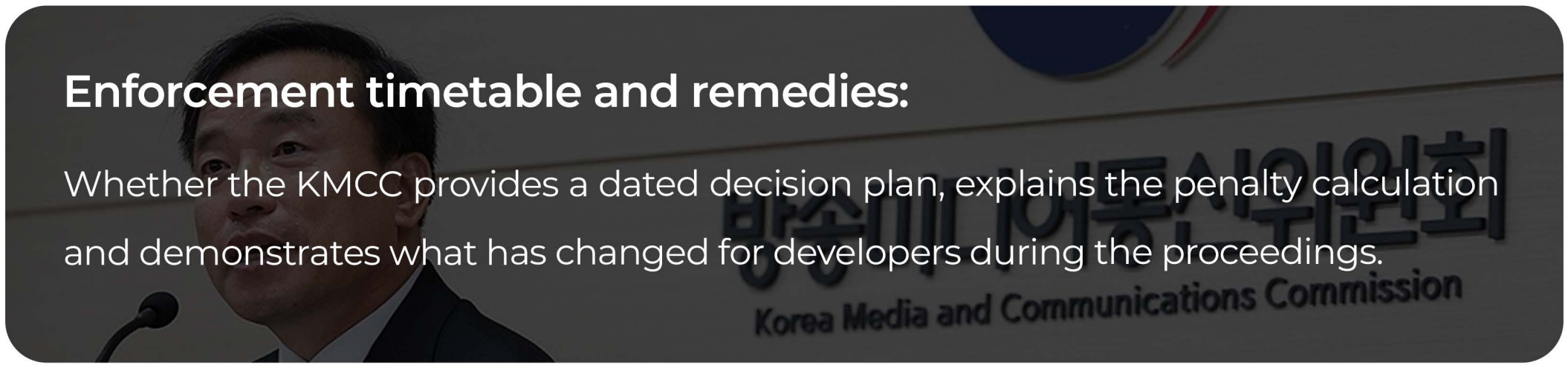
Ongoing questions about in-app fees and their impact on developers' revenues and pricing strategies.

03

App-review practices

Closer attention to whether review policies are applied fairly and may be used to restrict alternative billing or competing services.

What to watch



Enforcement timetable and remedies:

Whether the KMCC provides a dated decision plan, explains the penalty calculation and demonstrates what has changed for developers during the proceedings.

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