

Mironov Loses Power To Check New Senators

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The  **Moscow Times**

President Dmitry Medvedev on Thursday [signed](#) into law a bill that strips the Federation Council speaker from confirming the credentials of new senators, the Kremlin said, ending a procedure that was known to sometimes take months of elaborate checks.

Under the new rules, a candidate will automatically become a senator on the 10th day after his appointment by regional authorities. The law takes effect on Jan. 1.

The speaker, Sergei Mironov, who heads the pro-Kremlin A Just Russia party, opposed the bill, introduced by rival pro-Kremlin United Russia, which controls both houses of parliament.

In an [article](#) published in Vedomosti on Nov. 9, Mironov predicted that the new rules could allow people with low professional skills to become senators, lowering the quality of the chamber's work on bills.

Nevertheless, Mironov said he convinced fellow senators to support the legislation. He was

the only senator to vote against the bill, which was previously approved by the State Duma.

Meanwhile, Mironov is drafting an amendment that might give parties a chance to participate in proposing gubernatorial candidacies to the president, Kommersant [reported](#) Thursday.

Currently, the party that wins regional legislative elections has the right to pitch candidacies to the president, regardless of how many votes it collects in elections. United Russia has been winning most elections at all levels for years, often with more than 50 percent of the vote.

Mironov's proposal says that if no party garners more than 50 percent of the vote, a coalition of parties that jointly have more than 50 percent of the vote should be granted the right to propose gubernatorial candidacies.

Mironov's bill could break United Russia's monopoly on the right to propose governors in St. Petersburg and the Novosibirsk, Severdlovsk and Kurgan regions, Kommersant said.

Separately, Kremlin first deputy chief of staff Vladislav Surkov said Thursday that United Russia might fail to collect two-thirds of the vote in the 2011 Duma elections and "will have to enter into coalitions to pass a number of important issues," RIA-Novosti reported.

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