

Up to 6 Gubernatorial Campaigns This Fall

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President Dmitry Medvedev introduced the bill to return direct gubernatorial elections Jan. 16. **Andrei Makhonin**

Gubernatorial elections could be held for between three and six regions this year if a law to return direct elections for governors is passed.

The elections would be the first gubernatorial races held since since former President Vladimir Putin abolished them in 2004, replacing them with a system of appointments.

Elections will likely be held in the Novgorod, Bryansk, Amur and Buryatia regions, a Kremlin source said, RIA-Novosti reported.

"We believe that if there are no unforeseen circumstances, these governors and other will be replaced ... it will be the first test," he said.

Under proposed legislation, the voting for the gubernatorial elections would take place on a single day, set for October 14.

The second reading of the bill to return the elections will be held in the State Duma Tuesday. The bill was introduced by President Dmitry Medvedev Jan. 16.

The third reading of the bill is scheduled for Wednesday, and it could move to the Federation Council by Friday. If it clears all hurdles, the law will go into effect June 1, clearing the way for new elections.

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