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Novosibirsk Region Latest to Pass Anti-Gay Law

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A view of Novosibirsk **Denis Grishkin**

Novosibirsk's regional legislature passed a new law banning "homosexual propaganda" among youth Thursday, making Russia's third-largest city a part of the emerging national debate about anti-gay legislature.

"Today we are talking about protecting the majority of people who are not associated with homosexuality, to keep them from having to explain to their children that things like this happen," regional deputy Alexander Ilyushchenko said, RIA-Novosti reported.

"We are speaking about first and foremost all kinds of gay pride parades, because there is no overt propaganda, but most of it comes to promotion in places where there could be minors," he said.

The law limits promoting homosexual activity among minors, backed up by fines from 1,000 ($30) to 3,000 rubles for private citizens, 3,000 to 5,000 for officials, and 10,000 to 50,000 for legal entities, Interfax reported.

The debate on such laws is beginning to shift towards the federal level. At a meeting earlier this week in which the Moscow City Duma accepted a law banning all forms of sexual propaganda to minors, City Duma Speaker Vladimir Platonov said it was necessary to "address to the Federation Council in order to prepare a good federal legislative initiative that would protect minors from all the negative information."

Ilyushchenko said the Novosibirsk law was just a temporary measure until such a federal law was enacted.

Novosibirsk joins the St. Petersburg, Ryazan, Kostroma and Arkhangelsk regions in banning homosexual propaganda to minors.

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