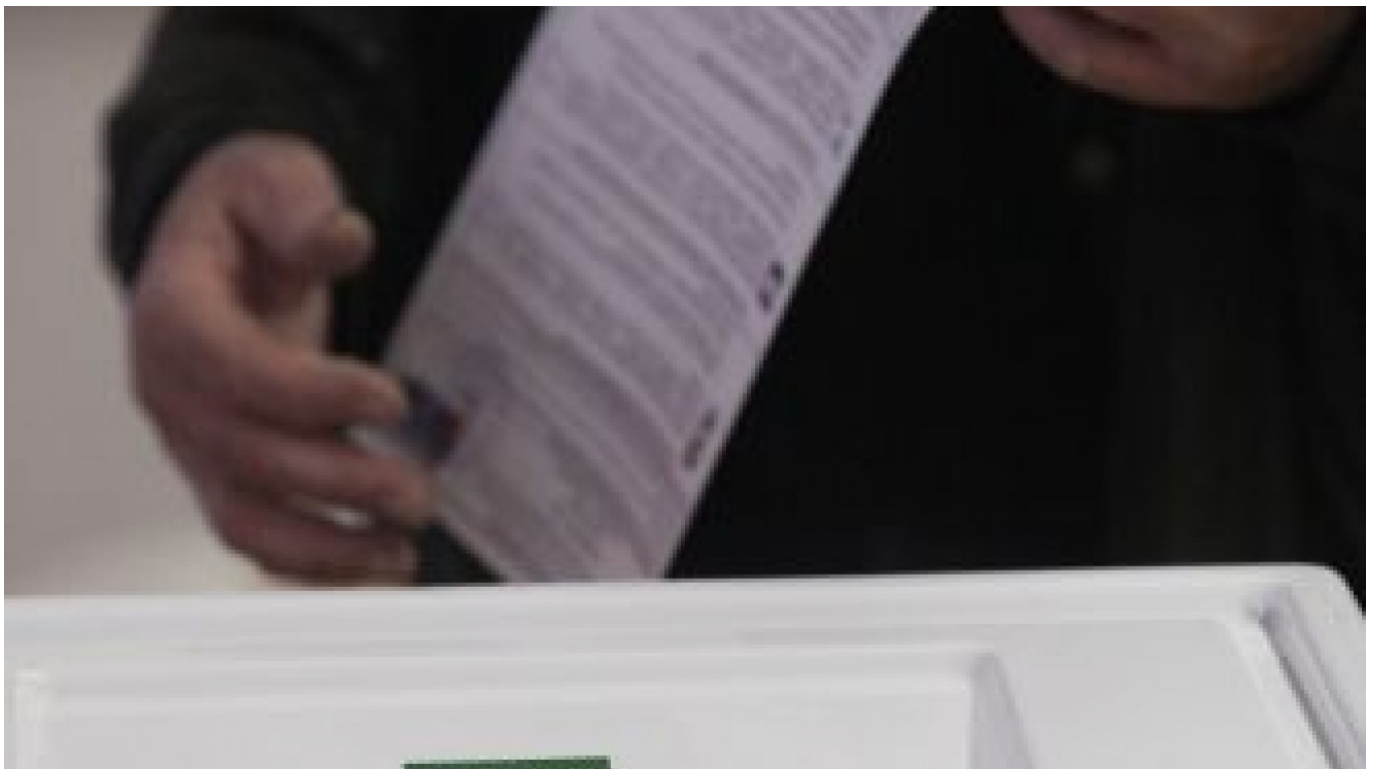


Teacher Who Revealed Falsifications Must Pay Fine

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A man votes during the December 4 election. **Maxim Stulov**

A St. Petersburg court ordered schoolteacher Tatyana Ivanova to pay 30,000 rubles (\$890) after she reported falsifications in December elections.

The decision partially satisfied a case brought by Regional Board of Education head Natalya Nazarova, which originally sought 100,000 rubles to protect her reputation and for "moral suffering."

"I understand that politics is a very dirty thing, but of course, if they offered to let me participate one more time in the election campaign, I would not mind taking the place of [elections chief Vladimir] Churov," Ivanova said on her way out of the courtroom, Fontanka.ru reported.

Nazarova brought the case against the teacher after Ivanova said the education board and the city elections committee had organized falsifications in State Duma and local Dec. 4 elections in St. Petersburg.

Ivanova said that when she headed a voting station at a city school in polls, election workers were instructed to forge signatures and submit extra election ballots in favor of United Russia. She said the workers were asked to ignore violations of voting rules, and polling station heads were promised 70,000 rubles to cooperate. Ivanova said she refused the money, and as a result, United Russia received one of the lowest results in the city at her polling station.

As the story gained attention in the media, pressure mounted at the school, and Ivanova, who had taught for more than 30 years, said she had to leave her position.

The case has gathered attention in social networks, and Internet users said they would help pay the fine.

Supporters flooded the court hearing Friday, spilling out into the street. Several dozen outside held flowers along with the white ribbons that have become symbols of opposition's protest.

Some supporters even came from Moscow to attend the 3 1/2-hour court session, RIA-Novosti reported.

Ivanova's lawyers said she would appeal the decision.

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