

Ruling Party Backs Tougher Drunk-Driving Stance After Deadly Crash

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Andrei Vorobyov, leader of United Russia's faction in the State Duma.

United Russia is planning legal amendments to radically increase penalties for drunk driving two days after an inebriated motorist killed seven people in southwest Moscow, a senior party official said Monday.

"There should be radical increases in the fines, we're not talking about 5,000 rubles [\$160]. We will propose a fine of at least 100,000 rubles," Andrei Vorobyov, leader of the party's State Duma faction, told journalists, Interfax reported.

Five thousand rubles is the current fine for driving under the influence of alcohol.

The ruling party will also press for lengthy bans and criminal punishments for repeat offenders, even if their driving doesn't cause casualties, Vorobyov said, adding that the matter had been discussed at a party presidium meeting.

"A mere 5,000 rubles and a misdemeanor charge, that's way too small," he said.

United Russia's faction head said party colleagues would present the planned amendments to the lower house "in the shortest possible time frame" and stressed that other Duma factions support United Russia's position.

President Vladimir Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said Monday that "the events of the past week confirm the necessity of discussing this issue and adopting tougher measures," RIA-Novosti reported.

A drunk driver plowed into a bus stop in Moscow's southwest Saturday afternoon, killing seven and injuring three.

The driver, identified in media reports as Alexander Maximov, 30, said he had been drinking for two days prior to the crash. Maximov had his license confiscated in 2010 for drunk driving, and police only returned it to him in March.

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