

United Russia Balks at Easing Drunk-Driving Law

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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United Russia has backed the country's zero-tolerance policy on drinking and driving, possibly derailing legislation aimed at preventing the arrest of drivers who drink slightly fermented drinks like kvas or kefir.

A meeting of the ruling party's presidium voted against an amendment that would allow a blood alcohol level of 0.2 parts per million, United Russia Deputy Andrei Isayev said, according to Interfax.

The proposed amendment was expected to be sent to the Supreme Court and the government for consideration Monday. After a spate of traffic accidents involving drunk drivers, the State Duma discussed the bill on the legal alcohol content for drivers last week.

A work group consisting of lawmakers and outside experts proposed that the maximum

legal amount of alcohol in drivers' blood should not exceed 0.2 parts per million and recommended punishment of a fine of up to 50,000 rubles and a three-year license suspension.

Andrei Vorobyov, leader of United Russia's faction in the Duma, said Friday that although experts had suggested that the legal alcohol level of 0.2 per mil was the most reasonable option, anything other than a total ban on alcohol for drivers could be interpreted by some drivers as a sanction to drink and drive.

But human rights veteran Lev Ponomarev pointed out Monday that small amounts of alcohol may be retained in the human body naturally.

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