The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Retail Lobbyist Theft Trial Starts

By The Moscow Times

November 15, 2012



Irina Kanunnikova speaking at St. Petersburg's Lenexpo exhibition center in 2009.

A Moscow district court read out criminal theft charges Thursday against the former head of the Union of Independent Retailers in a case in which the court has refused requests to introduce witnesses, including two people who support the prosecutor's arguments.

That is a long fall from grace for Irina Kanunnikova, who led the union for four years and took part in its development into a major lobbying group for small food stores nationwide. In 2009, at the height of the financial crisis, she accompanied then-Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and top food store executives on a grocery store visit to examine food prices.

Investigators with the Moscow police and now the prosecutor's office say she stole money from the union while serving as its director. Kanunnikova vigorously protested her innocence in interviews with The Moscow Times, saying her former colleagues brought the case to the police even though one of the colleagues sought out her expertise just weeks beforehand.

Kanunnikova currently is president of a retail-consulting firm that she founded after leaving

the union, which represented the interests of more than 1,800 stores by the time she left in March 2010. The police charged her in May of that year.

The next court hearing is scheduled for Dec. 4.

Related articles:

- Armed Men Attack Stationary Driver in Broad Daylight
- Investigators Mull Charges Over Celebratory Gunfire
- Senior Perm Official Arrested Over APEC Corruption Scandal

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/11/15/retail-lobbyist-theft-trial-starts-a19454