

St. Pete Lawmakers Pass Bill Banning Demonstrations at Major Landmarks

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Lawmakers in St. Petersburg have tentatively approved a law that would ban demonstrations on the city's two major landmarks, Palace Square and Nevsky Prospekt.

The bill, which was introduced to the local parliament by Governor Georgy Poltavchenko, was passed by a 28-19 vote, Interfax reported. The leaders of the oppositional Communists and A Just Russia factions and members of the Yabloko faction voted against. United Russia currently holds 20 of the assembly's 50 seats.

Before Wednesday's vote, Poltavchenko's envoy to parliament caused a scandal when he warned deputies that parliament might be dissolved if they did not consider the law. The envoy, Mikhail Brodsky, argued that the bill was necessary to bring local and federal law into accordance with each other, Fontanka.ru reported.

The bill would ban demonstrations on Palace Square, the scene of the 1917 storming of the

Winter Palace and of the 1905 Bloody Sunday massacre. It would also ban demonstrations along the city's major thoroughfare, Nevsky Prospekt, and on Saint Isaac's Square.

Apart from that, protest marches would be banned from coming any closer than 200 meters to government buildings, train stations, medical institutions, sea ports and airports, and no closer than 100 meters to metro entrances, according to the bill's text, [published](#) on the assembly's website.

The bill exempts religious ceremonies, cultural and sports events from the ban.

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