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Doctors Should Be Fined for Breaking Abortion Rules, Mizulina Says

By The Moscow Times

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The prenatal clinic on Sevastopolsky Prospekt, Moscow. **Maxim Stulov**

State Duma Deputy Yelena Mizulina, who co-authored the gay propaganda law, proposes bringing in fines for doctors who break the 2011 law on abortion procedures, a news report said Monday.

Mizulina, who is head of the State Duma's Committee on Family, Women and Children, and is a member of the A Just Russia party, believes doctors should be fined for not warning women about the health risks involved in having abortions and for not giving them time to reconsider, she told Izvestia daily.

Mizulina will submit the relevant amendments to the Duma for consideration in the fall. She didn't say how big the fines would be.

Currently, the law only stipulates prison terms of up to five years for doctors who terminate

pregnancies without a higher medical education in the specific field.

The 2011 law "On the Basics of Protection of the Citizen's Health" introduced certain rules for performing abortions but no punishments for violating these rules have been enforced.

The law authorizes doctors to perform abortions without medical necessity if the duration of the pregnancy doesn't exceed 12 weeks. They can also terminate pregnancies of up to 22 weeks for non-medical reasons, for example, if the woman was raped.

It also obliges doctors to inform women about the possible harm an abortion could do to them, including possible future infertility, and give them from 48 hours to seven days to reconsider, depending on the duration of her pregnancy.

But staff at several clinics told Mizulina's assistants by telephone that their clinics performed abortions after more than 12 weeks of pregnancy without medical necessity and without asking them to think over their decision.

Mizulina will also propose a ban on the sale of pills for drug-induced miscarriages without a doctor's prescription, saying women may require urgent medical assistance after they take such pills, Izvestia reported.

Mizulina's committee will also consider the introduction of state financial allowances for pregnant women that will be paid until the woman quits work for a maternity leave, Mizulina told Izvestia.

The gay propaganda law, which was signed by President Vladimir Putin in June, introduces fines for people found guilty of trying to promote "non-traditional sexual relationships" among minors and has seen Mizulina come in for criticism from LGBT rights activists.

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