The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Anti-Gay Law Blamed in Visa Denial

By The Moscow Times

September 19, 2013



Gomez performing at a concert in Frankfurt, Germany on Saturday. **Frank Rumpenhorst**

U.S. pop star Selena Gomez has been forced to cancel two concerts in Russia after indirectly falling victim to Russia's anti-gay law, concert organizers said Thursday.

Gomez failed to secure a Russian visa after the government tightened the visa regime for foreign musicians in response to Madonna's and Lady Gaga's decisions to openly support gays during their shows in Russia last year, the organizers told RIA Novosti.

Russian conservatives attempted to file lawsuits against those U.S. singers in the spirit of the controversial and vaguely worded law banning the promotion of "nontraditional sexual relationships" to minors that Russia adopted this summer.

The head of the Petersburg Music Industry company, Yevgeny Finkelshtein, said earlier this month that he feared the finger-pointing would discourage other performers from visiting the country.

"Not a single person is going to visit us if the Prosecutor General's Office starts disputing something or looking for guilty parties," Finkelshtein said, RIA reported.

Openly gay British pop star Elton John said earlier this week that he planned to go ahead with a Moscow concert in December because it would help serve the interests of the Russian gay community.

It remained unclear whether he had been granted a Russian visa.

Gomez, 21, had been scheduled to perform at St. Petersburg's Ice Palace on Sept. 23 and at Moscow's Olimpiisky stadium on Sept. 25. The Texas native, who has appeared in more than a dozen Hollywood films, saw her technopop song "Come & Get It" go double platinum this year.

There was no immediate word on ticket refunds for the canceled concerts.

Original url: https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2013/09/19/anti-gay-law-blamed-in-visa-denial-a27818