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Duma Deputies 'United' on Returning Daylight Savings

By The Moscow Times

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A misty winter morning in Solntsevo district, Moscow. A return to winter time would see the sun rise earlier. **akk_rus**

Eight deputies representing all State Duma factions have signed on as co-authors of a bill to reinstate daylight savings time, which was abandoned in 2011 by then-President Dmitry Medvedev, a news report said Tuesday.

Such a rare show of support from across the political spectrum demonstrates the urgency of the legislation and voters' displeasure with the current system, said a United Russia deputy from the All-Russia People's Front, Vladimir Gutenyov, who submitted the bill for review in the lower chamber on Sept. 20, Izvestia reported.

The authors are calling for a return to the system that existed in Russia from 1930 to 2011, claiming that the current year-round summer time is especially detrimental for children.

"In remote regions the situation has reached the point of absurdity, children don't see the sun, which negatively affects their health," said co-author Maxim Shingarkin of the Liberal Democratic Party.

Reports of another possible coalition motion surfaced last week, when Sergei Kalashnikov, head of the Duma's Public Health Committee, told Itar-Tass that the authors of four separate bills had agreed to put their heads together to present a united proposal by Oct. 1.

But despite public and political support for the change to winter time, it may be impossible in 2013.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, who oversees preparation for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi, said Thursday that "a time change is already definitely impossible."

"On the basis of the calendar that is established in Russia, all contracts for the broadcasting of the Olympic Games have been concluded," Kozak said, adding that the government would have had to agree on a return to winter time by Feb. 1.

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