

Bill to Switch Russia to Winter Time Submitted to State Duma

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A bill that has been introduced to the State Duma could change the clocks to year round winter

A senior lawmaker on Monday submitted a bill to the State Duma that would permanently set clocks to winter time in Russia.

More than 100 deputies from the four Duma factions have signed the bill, including around 12 members from the ruling United Russia party, said Sergei Kalashnikov, head of the Duma Committee on Public Health and one of the bill's authors.

Russia has been living in permanent "summer time" since 2011, when an initiative by then-President Dmitry Medvedev saw clocks being moved forward in March, but not put back in the fall.

Kalashnikov, a member of the Liberal Democratic Party, or LDPR, has long crusaded against the switch, saying in 2012 that it has condemned the population to increased stress and worsening health.

The current bill would not restore the seasonal changing of clocks currently observed in the West, however. If accepted, it will move Russia from Medvedev's "eternal summer" to year round winter time.

"With the adoption of the bill Russians will start living by astronomical time, as in natural; already the legally required seasonal changing of the clocks has been canceled," Kalashnikov said Monday, RIA Novosti reported.

Duma Speaker Sergei Naryshkin said that a lot of people support the idea of switching to winter time and that, as such, the Duma will give the bill serious consideration.

United Russia party member Sergei Zheleznyak said that the bill is unlikely to be discussed until after the Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Sochi, which take place in February and March respectively.

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