

Lawmaker Proposes Ban on 'Western Santa Claus'

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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A State Duma deputy from the Liberal Democratic Party has said that Russia should create a government standard regulating the appearance of Father Frost, the Russian version of Santa Claus.

Mikhail Degtyaryov, an LDPR member who ran for mayor last year, wrote a letter to the Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov asking for regulation of what Father Frost and his sidekick Snegurochka (Snow Maiden) look like, Izvestia reported Wednesday.

The initiative would effectively ban the use of the more Western red-suit clad Santa Claus, which is thought to have been made popular by U.S. beverage giant Coca-Cola, in place of Father Frost with his traditional long caftan and other particularities.

Degtyaryov said that the "corporate initiative" of Santa Claus could change young people's attitudes to the "cultural codes of our people." He also lamented the replacement of Russian

Winnie the Pooh in Russians' minds with the Disney version of the bear and said that Santa Claus "undermines cultural sovereignty and spiritual sovereignty."

The standard governing Father Frost's image would apply to the makers of toys and costumes, as well as children's books and television and Internet content.

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