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Ultraconservative Duma Deputy Mizulina to Run for Federation Council

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Yelena Mizulina

Yelena Mizulina, the ultraconservative lawmaker from the Just Russia party, might be leaving the State Duma for the upper chamber of parliament, the Federation Council, the Interfax news agency reported Thursday.

Mizulina said she would serve as a senator from the Omsk region of Siberia in the Federation Council if the region's acting governor wins the Sept. 13 election, the report said.

“Acting Omsk Governor Viktor Nazarov has indeed offered for me to become one of the candidates for senator from the Omsk region with whom he will be running in the election,” she was quoted as saying. “I accepted the offer because I consider him an effective manager.”

Each of Russia's regions has two representatives in the Federation Council.

If named senator, Mizulina, 60, would be leaving the State Duma, where she made headlines

with her conservative crusades against gays, abortion, and U.S. adoptions of Russian orphans — and in favor of polygamy.

“To criminalize [polygamy] is ridiculous, because the cause is not connected with an absence of criminal law, but rather the fact that there are not enough men with whom women want to start families and have children,” Mizulina said earlier this year, according to remarks carried by RIA Novosti.

Her other lawmaking ideas included imposing fines on people who get divorced, and introducing a mention of Orthodox Christianity in the country's Constitution, which currently proclaims Russia a secular state giving no religion preferential legal rights or status.

Some of Mizulina's proposals seemed so outlandish — even by Russian legislative standards — that a petition requiring her to submit to a psychiatric evaluation garnered more than 100,000 signatures last year. Although the number of signatures on the petition cleared the threshold for it to receive a government review, the authorities decided to not to act on it.

Commenting on Mizulina's possible departure for the Federation Council, a member of the State Duma's legislative committee, Yury Sinelshchikov of the Communist party, said that her “agenda” would live on, because she would still be able to introduce bills in the lower chamber as a senator, RBC reported.

The head of the legislative committee, Pavel Krasheninnikov, said however that “it does not matter who the author of the initiatives is — if they are harmful, the committee will not support them,” the report said.

In all, Mizulina has introduced 136 bills in the State Duma, according to the legislature's website.

Correction: An earlier version of this story incorrectly stated that Mizulina was a member of the United Russia party. She is in fact a member of the Just Russia party.

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