

Russian Lawmaker Takes on Nike in Latest 'Gay Propaganda' Fight

By [The Moscow Times](#)

July 30, 2015



Conservative St. Petersburg City Duma Deputy Vitaly Milonov is campaigning to have Nike's Summer 2015 collection #betrue banned from the Russian market, pro-government daily Izvestia reported on Thursday. The collection, which features rainbow-themed merchandise, "celebrates the LGBT community and the universality of sport," according to the Nike website.

Milonov, who is known for his anti-LGBT campaigns, argues that the display and sale of the collection falls under the category of "gay propaganda," which was banned under a 2013 Russian law. In an interview with Izvestia, Milonov said that Nike is particularly dangerous because its "perverted values" are part of a soft-power campaign aimed at teenagers, who are especially susceptible to advertising messages.

A salesperson at a Nike store in the center of Moscow said that the collection is not available in Russian stores, and can only be purchased through the company's American website.

The salesperson added that, in his opinion, the collection would not be popular in Russia because of its association with the LGBT community.

Representatives of Nike Russia told Izvestia: "Nike does not discriminate, based on sexual orientation, sex, nationality or age. Nike supports social and cultural diversity and seeks to deliver inspiration and innovation to every athlete in the world. In Russia, Nike does not request inclusion of any particular products or collections from its partners. The stores decide themselves, which products they want to stock."

Nike has produced a #betrue collection every summer since 2012.

Original url:

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