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Russian Region Revokes Alcoholic Ban for Citizens Under 21

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The Supreme Court of the central Russian republic of Mordovia has revoked a regional ban on the sale of alcoholic drinks to people under the age of 21, ruling that raising the legal drinking age beyond the federal threshold of 18 was illegal.

Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova said the proposal has the "ardent support" of her agency, RBC reported.

The court acted on a suit filed by a local man, Alexander Puzikov, who argued that Mordovia's restriction flies in the face of the federal law that permits Russians to drink alcohol from the age of 18, the court said in a statement on its website Wednesday.

Puzikov, 19, claimed the restriction infringed on his right as a Russian citizen to buy alcoholic drinks, Rossiiskaya Gazeta government daily reported.

The ruling to repeal the restriction has not yet come into force, the court stressed in bold

typeface on its website Wednesday. Court spokeswoman Dina Pustakina said regional lawmakers were likely to appeal the ruling, Rossiiskaya Gazeta reported.

A member of the upper chamber of Russia's parliament, Anton Belyakov, has submitted a bill to the State Duma, or the lower house, to raise the federal legal drinking age to 21, RBC news agency reported last week.

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