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Duma Mulls Restricting Promotion, Sale of Cheap Alcohol

By The Moscow Times

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Restricting alcohol sales and promotion has been debated repeatedly in the Duma.

A draft bill banning cheap deals on alcohol and free tasting sessions has been introduced to the State Duma, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Thursday.

The bill was put forward by Oleg Mikheyev from the A Just Russia party, who said in an explanatory note that the bill's aim was to reduce alcohol demand.

Proposals include a ban on selling alcohol at discounted prices and promotion coupons, as well as restricting free tasting sessions to trade shows. Individuals could be fined between 2,000 and 3,000 rubles ($30-45) for non-compliance; businesses and organizations could face penalties up to 150,000 rubles ($2,300).

Mikheyev was quoted by RIA Novosti as saying that discounts and promotions could push young people into alcohol abuse.

"At an especially high risk are students, who do not have stable income, and youth just entering adulthood," he said.

Restricting alcohol sales and promotion has been debated repeatedly in the Duma, with a ban on sales to under-21s proposed this September and a bill prohibiting tasting sessions in shops drafted in May.

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