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Russian Lawmaker Wants to Ban Teachers From Electoral Commissions

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A municipal lawmaker in St. Petersburg has called for banning school teachers from serving on electoral commissions, saying the measure would shield educators from involvement in vote-rigging, according to a statement on his website.

“It's impossible to to be forced under management's pressure to be engaged in [vote] falsifications on Sunday, and then sow reason, goodness, eternal [truth] on Monday,” city lawmaker Maxim Reznik of the liberal opposition Yabloko faction said in a statement.

The lawmaker, who heads the St. Petersburg legislature's committee for education, science and culture, said he has drafted amendments to the city's electoral laws to “protect those who teach and educate children from participating in dubious procedures.”

The bill is scheduled to come up for debate at the city legislature Wednesday, the BBC Russian Service reported.

Reznik said there is little chance that his bill will pass, but insisted the topic still needed to be raised publicly, ahead of the city's legislative elections next fall, the report said.

The lawmaker had proposed a similar measure in 2012, but the St. Petersburg legislature rejected the bill, the city's Nevskiye Novosti news portal reported.

Past elections in Russia have been marred by wide-spread falsifications, according to independent observers.

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