

Opposition's Roizman Drops out of Governor's Race, Calls for Election Boycott

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Yekaterinburg Mayor Yevgeny Roizman magspace.ru

Opposition politician and Yekaterinburg Mayor Yevgeny Roizman has dropped out of the Sverdlovsk region's gubernatorial race, after failing to gather enough support from local deputies.

Immediately after announcing the decision, Roizman [expressed](#) his grievances with the electoral system on Twitter and called for a boycott of the election slated for Sept. 10.

"These are not elections," he wrote. "This is the deception of voters and role-playing games. I think honest people should not take part in this. These elections need to be boycotted."

Roizman has been the mayor of Yekaterinburg since 2013 when he ran on behalf of oligarch Mikhail Prokhorov's Civic Platform party and defeated the ruling United Russia candidate. This time, he was running on the liberal Yabloko party's ticket.

While he is among the country's best-known opposition figures, Roizman has drawn criticism from some in his own camp for his hard-handed approach towards drug addicts.

But his decision to drop out is a significant setback for the opposition and highlights the obstacles outsiders face running in elections.

According to a 2012 law, candidates are required to gather the signatures of 5 to 10 percent of municipal deputies or municipal administration heads to run.

At a press conference following Roizman's announcement to drop out, Grigory Yavlinsky, the leader of the Yabloko liberal opposition party, called the requirement "a means of political corruption." He argues deputies will only sign off on a candidate, if they have the backing of the local governor.

The opposition-leaning Dozhd television channel cited a source in the presidential administration as saying that the Sverdlovsk region's current governor had feared a Roizman candidacy.

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