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Russia’s Last Opposition Mayor Quits

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Aleksandr Scherbak / TASS

The last opposition mayor of a major Russian city has resigned in protest of a local lawmakers' decision to abolish direct mayoral elections.

The legislative assembly of the Sverdlovsk region voted last month to scrap mayoral elections in the regional capital of Yekaterinburg, Russia’s fourth-largest city, despite city-wide protests. Yekaterinburg Mayor Yevgeny Roizman, an outspoken politician highly critical of Russia's ruling party, had held the post since his election in 2013.

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“The situation forced me to resign,” Yekaterinburg Mayor Yevgeny Roizman told The Moscow Times after announcing his resignation at a municipal administration meeting on Tuesday.

“I refused to add the item [to amend the election statute] to the meeting’s agenda,” he said, adding that he had been elected by the city’s citizens and was representing their interests.

The state-run RIA Novosti news agency later cited Roizman as saying that he plans to continue his political career.

“You can have no doubt that I’ll be in demand,” Roizman said.

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