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Gays Should Be 'Cured,' Russian Lawmaker Says

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Tamara Pletnyova **Stanislav Krasilnikov / TASS**

An outspoken communist lawmaker in Russia has said in an interview on state television that gay people are "sick" and need to be "cured" of their homosexuality.

Russia banned displays of “homosexual propaganda” to minors in 2013, while courts regularly ban gay pride events and public polls show surging anti-LGBT sentiment.

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In a late Tuesday interview on state television, Tamara Pletnyova, the head of the State Duma’s Family, Women and Children Committee, mentioned the 19th-century composer Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s sexuality as a secret “he was ashamed of.”

“Why criminally punish them? They’re sick, after all. They should be cured,” Pletnyova said on Channel One’s “Pozner” talk show.

Authorities in Russia's North Caucasus republic of Chechnya have since 2017 been accused of illegally detaining and killing gay men and women.

Pletnyova turned heads on the eve of the football World Cup last summer with calls for Russian women to avoid having sex with foreign fans, especially those of a different skin tone, saying it could lead to broken families.

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