

Russia Moves to Ban Keeping Businessmen in Detention for No Reason

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Russian lawmakers have approved legislation banning law enforcement authorities from extending pre-trial detentions for businesspeople without reason amid criticism over the criminalization of business disputes.

Officials are seeking to lure investment to boost Russia's struggling economy and President Vladimir Putin has [called for](#) an end to unfounded probes into so-called economic crimes. However, government polling has found that a fear of criminal investigations is growing among businesspeople.

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Russia's lower house of parliament on Tuesday approved the third and final reading of a draft law requiring investigators to provide sufficient reasoning for extending entrepreneurs' pre-trial detentions.

“It’s forbidden to place CEOs and individual entrepreneurs in detention centers in order not to inhibit business activity during the investigation,” State Duma speaker Vyacheslav Volodin [said](#).

The changes will affect suspects under investigation for embezzlement, fraud, abuse of power, property damage and other economic crimes.

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The bill, which passed in the State Duma almost two years after its [submission](#), needs to gain upper-house approval and Putin’s signature before becoming law.

Shortly after the high-profile arrest of U.S. investor Michael Calvey on suspicion of fraud in February, Putin [voiced support](#) for an end to extending pre-trial detentions during the investigation phase.

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