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Prominent Russian Feminist Lawmaker Says Won't Seek Re-Election

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Oksana Pushkina's socially liberal views made her an anomaly among her colleagues from the ruling, pro-Kremlin United Russia party. **State Duma Press Service**

Russian lawmaker Oksana Pushkina, the deputy chairman of the State Duma's committee on family, women and children, will not seek re-election in her district in this September's legislative elections, she told the RBC news website reported Monday.

"I will not hide the fact that the Moscow region's governor sees another person as the main contender for victory in the 122nd electoral district. But my principles do not allow me to go to the polls against my previous team," Pushkina told RBC.

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She did not specify whether she would run for election in another district.

Russian singer Denis Maidanov, a vocal supporter of President Vladimir Putin, told the

Znak.com news website that he plans to run for Pushkina's State Duma seat.

Pushkina's feminist, pro-LGBT and pro-choice views — which she has described as "common sense" — made her an anomaly among her colleagues from the ruling, pro-Kremlin United Russia party.

In the heavily conservative State Duma, she has been the most prominent advocate for re-criminalizing domestic violence in Russia. She has also spoken out against abortion restrictions, criticized a bill banning surrogacy for single people and promoted the idea of legalizing baby boxes in Russia.

The former television host told RBC that her time in the State Duma helped her grow as a person.

"The only true path is the path of mistakes, disappointments and new hopes. Be optimistic, believe in the best," Pushkina said.

"The main thing that I've come to understand is that being a deputy is not a privilege, but a chance to change your country for the better. ... A true legislator is one who acutely feels the pain of others and does not hide from human suffering in the high offices on Okhotny Ryad," she added, referring to the location of the State Duma's headquarters.

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