The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Fugitive Russian Lawmaker Retains Position in Parliament 1 Year After Bribery Conviction – Report

September 22, 2023



State Duma deputy Vadim Belousov. **Anna Mayorova / URA.RU / TASS**

A fugitive Russian lawmaker has managed to retain his position in parliament a full year after being convicted on bribery charges, the investigative news website Mozhem Obyasnit reported Friday.

Last August, State Duma deputy Vadim Belousov was found guilty of accepting a bribe of 3.2 billion rubles ($49 million) — described as the largest in modern Russia's history — from a construction company in exchange for receiving lucrative state contracts.

A Moscow judge sentenced Belousov to 10 years in prison, but the deputy failed to appear in court and was declared a fugitive shortly after.

According to Mozhem Obyasnit, Belousov's fellow members in the systemic opposition party A Just Russia for Truth did not initially take steps to strip him of his mandate, as the court

ruling was undergoing an appeal process.

But even after the appeal was struck down in May, Belousov retained his mandate.

At the same time, Mozhem Obyasnit notes that Belousov managed to run for governor of central Russia's republic of Udmurtia last year despite being under investigation, while six bills he sponsored are currently under review in the lower-house State Duma.

So, too, is the wanted lawmaker still listed on the State Duma's website as being among the 27 members of the A Just Russia for Truth party in the 450-seat Duma.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/09/22/fugitive-russian-lawmaker-retains-position-in-parliament-1-year-after-bribery-conviction-report-a82543