

Russian Lawmakers to Consider Nationwide Ban on Abortions in Private Clinics

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Lawmakers in central Russia's Nizhny Novgorod region said they will submit a draft amendment to the country's parliament that would outlaw abortions at private clinics nationwide if passed, state media [reported](#) Thursday.

The draft amendment to Russia's federal law "On the Foundations of Preserving Citizens' Health" was passed unanimously and without discussion in Nizhny Novgorod's legislative assembly before regional lawmakers announced their intention to send it to the lower-house State Duma in Moscow.

If signed into law, the change would revoke the right of private clinics across the country to provide abortion services.

The regional lawmakers' announcement comes as authorities in several regions across

Russia, as well as in annexed Crimea, said that private clinics in their regions had “voluntarily” agreed to [stop providing](#) abortion services.

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Backers of Nizhny Novgorod’s draft amendment, which regional Governor Gleb Nikitin [initiated](#) earlier this month, say that private clinics fail to provide the necessary mental health and social support services to women who seek an abortion.

According to Nikitin, the change is intended to “improve [Russia’s] demographic situation and reduce the number of complications arising during and after artificially terminated pregnancy.”

An explanatory note accompanying the draft amendment states that abortions would still be provided at state-run medical institutions.

Meanwhile, legislators in Nizhny Novgorod [passed](#) a regional bill that outlaws the act of “coercing” women into undergoing an abortion, placing it among a growing number of regions to have introduced similar bans.

Thousands of residents of the Nizhny Novgorod region had [petitioned](#) against both the regional bill and federal-level draft amendment.

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