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Russian Lawmakers Scrap Bill Allowing Draft Deferments for Fathers

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Drafted Russian men say goodbye to their families. **Ivan Vysochinsky / TASS**

Russia's lower-house State Duma on Wednesday rejected a bill that would have granted draft deferments to men with three or more children, as some families demand a return of their loved ones from Ukraine.

The military initially granted deferments to fathers with three or more children under the age of 16 after President Vladimir Putin announced a "partial" mobilization in September 2022. However, that policy ended in January 2023, with officials later claiming the deferments were non-legally binding "recommendations" for recruitment officers.

The State Duma voted Wednesday to reject new deferment legislation after its defense committee argued it would hobble any recruitment efforts in the event of "armed aggression against Russia."

"A man must protect his family, our society and our state, and then think and take care of providing for his family," said lawmaker Andrei Krasov, a member of the ruling United Russia

party.

Communist party lawmaker Nina Ostanina, who co-authored the deferment bill, vowed to submit a revised version later this year.

According to Ostanina, nearly 1,000 men with three or more children under the age of 18 are currently serving in Ukraine, while a quarter million IT workers and 170,000 banking sector employees have received draft deferments.

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