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State Duma Strips United Russia Lawmaker of Mandate Amid Bribery Investigation

December 02, 2025



United Russia member Anatoly Vorobovsky. **State Duma**

Members of Russia's lower-house State Duma on Tuesday adopted a resolution stripping a fellow lawmaker of his parliamentary mandate as he faces a criminal investigation on charges of bribery.

Anatoly Voronovsky, who served in the State Duma as a member of the ruling United Russia party, is accused of accepting 25 million rubles ($323,000) in bribes tied to road construction contracts. The bribery charges carry a maximum sentence of 15 years in prison.

Last month, the State Duma voted unanimously to strip Voronovsky of his parliamentary immunity, thus allowing law enforcement authorities to move forward with a criminal investigation into the former lawmaker and arrest him if necessary.

According to media reports, Voronovsky submitted a written request to give up his seat in

parliament shortly after being stripped of his immunity.

Other reports indicated that the former lawmaker was formally charged with bribery but police did not arrest him since he handed over his passport and promised to appear in court when summoned.

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Ahead of Tuesday's vote, State Duma member Nikolai Kharitonov told other lawmakers that Voronovsky was in the hospital with "serious injuries" from an accident and urged delaying the decision for at least one week.

"I spoke to him this morning. He's not running anywhere," Kharitonov said.

Before being elected to the State Duma in 2021, Voronovsky served as deputy governor of the southern Krasnodar region.

Russia's Prosecutor General Alexander Gutsan reportedly accused Voronovsky of accepting bribes in the form of two apartments and renovations at his home during his time as deputy governor.

The CEO of a real estate company who had allegedly bribed Voronovsky was sentenced to four years in prison on charges of embezzling 209 million rubles ($2.7 million) in late October.

According to media reports, the CEO testified against Voronovsky under a pre-trial cooperation agreement and had the embezzlement charges dropped.

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