

Senators Pass Libel and Internet Censorship Bills

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Federation Council on Wednesday approved heavily criticized bills that hike fines for libel and allow authorities to block websites containing banned information, Interfax reported.

The libel bill hikes the maximum penalty for the offense to 5 million rubles (\$153,000) from the previous limit of 3,000 rubles.

The Internet censorship bill allows the federal government to set up a registry of blacklisted websites. Law enforcement agents are empowered to add a site after obtaining a court order. In cases of content they view as detrimental to children's health, they can add a site without an order.

The bills are now set to go to President Vladimir Putin for his signature, and if approved, they will come into force after their publication in state newspaper Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

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