

Bryansk Governor Removed From Oct. 14 Vote

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Bryansk region Governor Nikolai Denin

A Bryansk region court on Friday agreed to remove current Governor Nikolai Denin of United Russia from the ballot for the Oct. 14 gubernatorial election at the request of a Communist Party candidate.

It is not unusual for opposition party candidates in national and regional elections to be disqualified, but candidates from the ruling party are rarely taken off the ballot.

Denin and United Russia said they would appeal the ruling by the Bryansk Regional Court to cancel Denin's registration as a candidate, calling it groundless.

The court granted a request by Communist Party gubernatorial candidate Vadim Potomsky, who questioned the authenticity of signatures by municipal deputies and district heads that Denin submitted as part of his candidacy, RIA-Novosti reported.

Such signatures are required to register as a candidate for governor under legislation initiated in December by then-President Dmitry Medvedev reinstating direct gubernatorial elections, which had been abolished by President Vladimir Putin in 2004.

Potomsky also alleged that Denin had improperly used his authority as governor when collecting the signatures and that there had been violations in media coverage of Denin's candidacy.

The case was heard over the course of three days, and all 253 signatures submitted by Denin were scrutinized by the court, the news agency said.

United Russia party secretary Sergei Neverov said that "everyone in the court" had confirmed the authenticity of the signatures and that therefore there must have been foul play in the court's decision.

"Either there was unprecedented pressure put on the judge, or there is a serious element of corruption in this case," Neverov said in comments carried on the ruling party's website.

He said the party would appeal the ruling and request an investigation. "Apparently there are grounds for [such an] investigation," he said.

The Bryansk region, located about 400 kilometers southwest of Moscow, has a population of about 1.2 million people. Major industries in the region include machine-building and metallurgy.

Denin, Potomsky and two other hopefuls had been given so-called candidate certification for the Oct. 14 vote: Mikhail Marchenko of the nationalist Liberal Democratic Party and Andrei Ponomaryov of the liberal Yabloko party, according to RIA-Novosti. Vyacheslav Rudnikov of A Just Russia had also applied to be a candidate in the race.

Gubernatorial elections are set to be held on Oct. 14 in five regions: Bryansk, Ryazan, Novgorod, Amur and Belgorod. Elections for mayor and for regional and municipal legislatures will be held in several cities and regions that day as well.

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