

30 Deputies May Have Divorced to Skirt Declarations

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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About 30 State Duma deputies may have gotten divorced this year in order to avoid declaring income and property registered to their spouses.

RIA-Novosti and Itar-Tass cited Duma sources as saying that about 30 deputies got divorced within two months before filing their 2012 declarations, which were published online Monday.

Andrei Andreyev, deputy head of the Duma's Credentials and Ethics Commission, said that while he didn't have data against which to check the allegation, he excluded the possibility of fictitious divorces. "There are as many opinions and situations as people," he said, RIA-Novosti [reported](#) Thursday.

Talk of suspicious divorces was fueled by revelations that Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy did not declare his wife's income and property, as he had the previous

year, when she was listed as having earned 71 million rubles (\$2.3 million) and owning three apartments.

Zhirinovskiy argued that his marriage was registered with the church, not the state, and therefore he is not required to declare her wealth. He also dismissed the declarations requirements as a pointless intrusion into officials' private lives.

The head of the Duma's declarations watchdog declined a request to investigate, saying Deputy Ilya Ponomarev filed the request incorrectly. On Friday, he said such allegations could not be grounds for an investigation by the commission.

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