

Bill to Punish Attacks on Municipal Deputies in Pipeline

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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State Duma deputies and human rights activists are planning to submit a bill introducing criminal responsibility for threats and violence towards municipal deputies following several assaults this year, a news report said Wednesday.

The legislation would give municipal deputies a status similar to that of law enforcement officers and other state officials with specific legal protection.

The proposed amendments to the Criminal Code are to be discussed Wednesday at a meeting of the municipal oversight task group in the Duma, Kommersant reported.

In their current form, the amendments would punish threats and acts of violence against a municipal deputy or their close relatives with up to five years imprisonment. Life-threatening violence against a municipal deputy would carry a prison term of up to 10 years.

The proposal was inspired by a widely publicized assault on Yelena Tkach, a municipal deputy of Moscow's Presnensky district, one of the bill's authors said. Tkach received a concussion when a man shoved her off the stage during public hearings on Oct. 16.

Another municipal deputy, Anton Morozov of the Sokol district, was beaten in August while carrying out a sting to see if retailers would sell him alcohol after the 11 p.m. cut-off.

"Municipal deputies often hold meetings, public hearings, they end up in the thick of conflicts, that's why such a measure is essential," Tkach said in support of the resolution.

Municipal deputies are elected officials tasked with organizing events in their district and representing the rights of constituents, although only 8 percent of the general public actually knows what they do, according to a 2012 poll by the Public Opinion Foundation.

Several Duma deputies have supported the amendments, including members of the ruling United Russia party.

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