

Communist Politician Parshin Loses Immunity After Being Accused of Fraud

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A Communist Party lawmaker was stripped of his legislative immunity Friday over fraud allegations.

Nikolai Parshin lost his immunity after a majority of State Duma deputies supported the Prosecutor General's motion to deprive him of it. Parshin, who had planned to run for governor of the Volgograd region, said that he would not be standing as a candidate after all.

Investigators say that Parshin, who previously served as a deputy in the Volgograd region's legislature, devised and organized a scheme to make money from the sale of a vacant building belonging to the city in 2008. Parshin is accused of initiating the sale of the building to a commercial company before convincing the city to buy it back a year later at a much higher cost, splitting the profit — more than 25 million rubles (\$727,000) — from the second sale with his accomplices.

The lawmaker, who was elected to the Duma in January, is one of several deputies to have

been stripped of their legislative immunity in the last 18 months.

Last month, Alexei Mitrofanov, head of the State Duma's Committee on Information Policy, Information Technology and Communications, was stripped of his immunity after being accused of extortion.

In May, Communist Party lawmaker Konstantin Shirshov was sentenced to five years in prison after losing his immunity in 2013 for trying to sell his Duma seat for \$10 million.

In February 2013, Oleg Mikheyev was deprived of his immunity over an ongoing fraud investigation.

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