



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IBA Concerned About Motives For New Judicial Appointments Process

RAMA, ON – Justice Minister Toews recently stated he will be adding police representation to judicial appointments committees as a move to further open up the judicial appointment process, which has called the integrity of the appointments process itself into question.

In November 2005, before the Parliamentary Sub-Committee on Appointments to the Federal Judiciary, the IBA expressed concern about the lack of representation of Aboriginal People as sitting judges and lack of participation in the judicial appointments process. Citing, among other things, the fact that Aboriginal Peoples were a founding partner in Confederation and as such should be full participants in Canada's legal pluralism, a more inclusive judicial appointments process was a cornerstone of our submissions. It is concerning that one of Canada's founding partners continues to be excluded from the appointments process while the Minister's latest changes reaches a possible tipping point for the Minister to hand select his own appointments by way of committee member majority.

It is the IBA's position that no issue on changes to the judicial appointments process should proceed without meritorious debate, all of which should be held in full view of the public's eye. Such an important issue of determining who selects Canada's judges is certainly worthy of public participation.

The IBA urges Minister Toews to hold a public debate about this very important issue rather than continue to wholesale off the integrity of Canada's Courts.

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