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The reporting of the appointment process of judges to the Supreme Court of Canada, involving Canada's former Attorney General, Jody Wilson-Raybould, is of significant concern for the Manitoba Bar Association (MBA).

The MBA has always supported a fair and formal appointment process for the judges to the Supreme Court of Canada. It is vital that any deliberations leading up to any appointment remain confidential. The recent breaches of confidentiality where the suitability of other candidates are discussed is highly disconcerting. It demeans the entire selection process and is harmful to the privacy of individual applicants.

The MBA is also deeply concerned about the comments made about Chief Justice Joyal of the Manitoba Court of Queen's Bench. The implication was given that Chief Justice Joyal could give rulings that would undermine the rights of women and members of the LGBTQ2S community. Such a suggestion is entirely improper, and indeed false. Chief Justice Joyal is a highly respected jurist who has defended Canada's political legal culture and has spoken out in favour of both a strong judiciary and equally strong legislative branch. He has also defended the importance of protecting equality in society, as well as individual and group rights. Nothing in what he has done throughout his judicial career, nor in the publicized comments he has made, could suggest that he is against a woman's right to choose, same-sex marriage, or LGBTQ2S rights generally. It is most appalling that such an inaccurate description has been suggested or implied.

It is, in the end, highly regrettable that Chief Justice Joyal was forced to respond and disclose deeply personal and confidential information.

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