

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) BILL
SUBMISSION FROM FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

How would you characterise your views on the Bill in general?

How would you characterise your views on the introduction of same sex marriage, so that same sex couples can marry each other?

In opposition

I strongly feel that the redefinition of marriage is unnecessary and damaging for our society. Marriage throughout history has been between one man and one woman, it seems ludicrous that our nation feels it has the right to redefine this. The proposals are radical, unprecedented and alarming. It is unclear what moral basis the government has for desiring such a change and it is equally unclear whether or not further changes may not arise in the future. What is to stop the introduction of polygamy or incest if certain people desire these things? No-one is stopping same-sex couples from having the right to be part of our society, but why are many in our nation being threatened with the denial of the right to maintain the long held definition of marriage?

How would you characterise your views on putting belief celebrants on the same footing as religious celebrants?

How would you characterise your views on the arrangements for authorising celebrants to solemnise opposite sex and same sex marriage (including the opt-in procedures)?

How would you characterise your views on civil partnerships changing to marriages?

How would you characterise your views on allowing civil marriage ceremonies to take place anywhere, other than religious premises, agreed between the couple and registrar?

How would you characterise your views on allowing the religious and belief registration of civil partnerships?

How would you characterise your views on allowing transgender persons to stay married when obtaining a full Gender Recognition Certificate, which provides legal recognition in the acquired gender?

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of protections for those in society who may have concerns about same sex marriage?

I am deeply concerned that my right to have freedom of thought, conscience and religion will be taken away by this bill. What will happen to me if I refuse to conduct the marriage of a same sex couple and I am taken to court by them? I am not at all convinced that this bill will protect my human rights, and I believe this bill should be abandoned until all uncertainty is removed. If someone has the right to say that same sex relationships should be called 'marriage' then someone else surely has the right to say that it is not a marriage. How is this bill going to protect the rights of all points of view?

Would you like to comment on the wider issue of freedom of speech?

Our democratically elected government has the duty and responsibility of protecting the rights of its citizens. If we are a democratic country then this bill must ensure that under no circumstances will any minister, or teacher, or any other individual be penalised or discriminated against for holding the traditional view of marriage and for acting according to that belief. To impose a new definition of marriage on people who are unable to accept it is nothing short of a dictatorship, and it makes a mockery of any notion of democracy in our nation.

Would you like to comment on any other wider issues in relation to the Bill that are not mentioned above?

Are you responding as...

a faith/belief-based organisation

Thomas Davis
Free Church of Scotland
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