

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM SIMON RIGG

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

In opposition

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

In opposition

Marriage is the lifelong union between one man and one woman. That is what makes it special and unique. Anything else just simply isn't marriage. Trying to redefine marriage is a waste of governmental resources. It undermines the historic legacy of marriage in the past, creates unnecessary conflict in the present and introduces confusing consequences for the future. If this issue is about legal rights and/or equality, then why not introduce a new concept of relationship that is fair for everyone or extend the definition of a civil partnership? Redefining marriage is radical, unnecessary and discriminatory. It is an attack on what many, many people hold dear. Under no circumstance mistake the opposition of the redefinition of marriage to be the opposition of same-sex couples. This issue is not homophobia - it is pro-marriage. As soon as an attempt is made to redefine marriage to include same-sex couples, there is nothing to stop it being further redefined - a union between more than two people, between people and animals, between family members, between children.

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

In opposition

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)?

In opposition

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

In opposition

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?

In opposition

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

In opposition

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?

1. Churches and celebrants who refuse to "marry" same-sex couples will be susceptible to litigation. Scottish law can be overruled by the courts of the European Union. 2. People who have a conscientious objection and who work in the public sector may lose their jobs or be unable to work in certain professions if they refuse to endorse same-sex marriage. That is discriminatory. 3. Equality laws have led to nearly all of Britain's faith-based adoption agencies shutting down. This directly affects the welfare of children. 4. While the law requires schools to provide religious education, it also protects atheist teachers from being compelled to teach it. Similar space should be given to teachers who, for religious convictions or otherwise, do not feel able to teach about same-sex marriage. Anything else is hypocritical. 5. Many parents will have deeply-felt views about their children being taught about same-sex marriage in the classroom. The law should not undermine these views but should protect parents' right to withdraw their children. Many will be unaware what their children are being taught so they should have a legal right to know when such lessons will take place.

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

No person should be compelled to express agreement with a same-sex marriage or be punished for expressing their disagreement with it. This freedom of speech should be protected by law. People who express a disagreement with the redefinition of marriage have a right to express that view freely. The redefinition of marriage from the lifelong union between one man and one woman, rather than the introduction of something new which covers a union between people of the same or different gender, is a direct attack on freedom of speech. In recent years, the vilification of those stating traditional beliefs about marriage has created a climate of fear. Redefinition of marriage can only divide people in a negative way.

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 private individual
A husband and father.

Simon Rigg
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