

MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ANDY WOOD

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

In support

I strongly believe in equality for all, on the same legal footing, regardless of their ethnicity, religion, gender or sexuality.

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

In support

I am in full agreement. While opponents of this bill have cited freedom of speech and warned that they believe that their Civil Liberties would be infringed by the passing of this bill, I believe that this is a smokescreen and an appalling point of view. A person cannot expect to enjoy freedom if they achieve that by discriminating against others based upon prejudices and not allowing others access to the same legal status purely because they hold irrational beliefs about what is normal and what is beyond the pale .

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

In support

Please see above.

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 support

I am a little concerned at the idea of opt-in in as much as does this mean certain organisations or individuals are allowed to opt-out on religious/personal grounds?

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

In support

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 support

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

In support

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?

In support

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 unsure as to what they require protecting from. Those who have concerns are already protected and currently enjoy a privileged status in society - i.e. legal recognition of heterosexual marriages. No part of the Bill is threatening to take that away. For those who object on personal or religious grounds I think this is dangerous ground. Would we allow a Doctor or Nurse to refuse to treat anyone because of their sexuality, gender or ethnicity? Anyone working with the public who did this would be quite rightly sanctioned. My personal feeling is that a same-sex couple would not ask a Church to carry out a marriage ceremony if they felt the individual or organisation were only doing it under duress.

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

I've commented on this earlier. I believe in freedom of speech, wholeheartedly. However, freedom of speech comes with responsibilities. If my exercising of my freedom of speech negatively affects individuals in ways beyond merely being offended but instead leaves groups or individuals on lesser legal footings then that is not freedom of speech that we are respecting but the right to have a prejudice or bias upheld.

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

Andy Wood
22 August 2013