MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) BILL

SUBMISSION FROM ARCHIE ALLISON

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

In support

I strongly support and welcome the bill. It will be a huge step forward for equality in Scotland.

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 believe that Equality means making the same CHOICES available to all. Marriage is a legal contract and has status and value in our society. Same sex couples should not be denied this.

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

In support

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

Generally I think that the opt-in procedures in the bill are fine. I would have preferred to see a complete change in the law so that ALL marriages are carried out in civil ceremonies only, leaving religious/belief ceremonies as 'added extras' by those who want them.

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
This is not something I had previously considered and I don't have strong views, other than to support anything that adds flexibility.

**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

I strongly support measures to allow transgender people who are married to obtain gender recognition without being required by the state to divorce. However, I'm not sure why a married person should need the consent of their spouse to obtain gender recognition. Perhaps it needs to be clarified that consent is only required when the couple seek to stay married. Presumably, without consent, the marriage will no longer be valid. Not sure about legal technicalities of this.

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

I think that the bill has included more than enough protections for people with concerns about same-sex marriage. As previously mentioned, I would have preferred ALL marriages to be Civil contracts/ceremonies only, thereby removing the input of all religious/belief organisations, and the need to 'protect' them. I also support the Equality Network's views on any calls for civil registrars to have a right to opt out of conducting same-sex marriages. I also support the Equality Network's views on any calls for teachers to have the right to opt out of mentioning same-sex marriage if a pupil asks about it or it comes up in class, and that parents should be able to remove their children from any class where same-sex marriage might be mentioned. Such measures would be the reverse of equality.

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

**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

Archie Allison

2 August 2013