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

In support

I strongly support and welcome the bill. Equality for all is essential and this bill will go a long way towards making this possible.

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

In support

As a gay man, the introduction of same sex marriage is very important to me. I believe it is important that the bill does not create two different versions of marriage - same sex marriage and mixed sex marriage because that would lead to continued discrimination. The law should treat all marriages the same, regardless of the genders of the spouses. Issues such as adultery should be treated the same for all types of marriage.

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

I agree that religious and belief organisations should be free to decide for themselves whether to solemnise only mixed-sex marriages, or same-sex marriages as well.

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

In support

I would very much like to consider changing my civil partnership to a marriage, although I would prefer this to be through a simple and inexpensive administrative procedure.

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

I strongly support the principle of allowing transgender people who are married to obtain gender recognition without being required by the state to divorce. Spousal consent should not be required for the granting of gender recognition but should instead be required for the subsequent re-registration of marriage and the issue of a new marriage certificate.

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

It has been proposed by some people that the bill should give civil registrars a statutory right to opt out of conducting same-sex marriages. I strongly oppose that. Unlike religious celebrants, civil registrars are carrying out a civil function on behalf of the state, and therefore an opt-out on grounds of their personal religious belief is not appropriate. It would set a dangerous precedent that public service providers (in local government, NHS, etc) should have a legal right to pick and choose who they serve. This is no more acceptable on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity than it would be on other grounds such as race. It has also been proposed by some people that teachers should 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. I strongly oppose this. Teachers are there to teach the facts, not their personal views, and should answer questions factually. No teacher will be required to say that they personally agree with same-sex marriage, but all teachers must treat all pupils with respect, whatever their family arrangements, including pupils with same-sex married parents. It would be unworkable to allow opt-outs from lessons where same-sex marriage is mentioned. Opt-outs are not available from lessons where divorce is mentioned, which is equally controversial for some people.

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

David Brian
22 August 2013