MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP (SCOTLAND) BILL
SUBMISSION FROM PHIL BROWNE

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

In support

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 have a family photo taken at my sisters wedding. In the photo are myself, my Dad, my Mum, my sister and my brother-in-law.  - All the people in the photo are hard working, law-abiding, upstanding citizens with good values, and they contribute to society.  - All the people in the photo are celebrating the joy of two people in love having their relationship recognised both legally and by the extended family, friends and society.  Sadly not everyone in the photo has equal rights under law.  - Despite being an upstanding citizen, I am denied the right to have my loving relationship recognised.  - My relationship is denied the validity given to couples by marriage.  - My relationship is denied the legal protections of marriage - e.g. hospital visitation rights if one partner is critically ill, legal certainty if a couple has any children, and legal/financial certainty if one partner dies.  - Why? - all because I happen to love someone of the same sex.  -My love for another man is identical to the love felt by opposite sex couples - so why the different treatment under law?

Everyone in the photo should have the same right to marry the person they love.  Love is love, regardless of who you love, it is all the same.  - I have been in love and know how special the love between two people can be. My family value and respect my relationship with another man, and treat my same sex partner the same as they would if we were legally married.  I want my country to allow me to marry the person I love.  This is important because I should have the same rights, and have my country treat me with the same respect and dignity as all other citizens. I should be allowed to marry, and my relationship given identical standing to the relationships of my parents and my sister.  My desire to have the choice to marry is supported by my entire community - my family, friends, work colleagues, and neighbours.  I can go out, find a woman I barely know and who I do not love, get married and immediately have all the rights and recognition of marriage - despite this being a sham.  However, if I cherish, adore, respect and love another man so much that I can not imagine a world without him - fulfill each other and love him so much that our love is greater than the sum of us - this is not recognised!!  - Society is ahead of the govt and the government needs to catch up by legalising marriage equality.

Numerous other countries legalised same sex marriage when public support was less than it is in Scotland - the world has not ended and people live their lives normally in these countries.  Inter-racial marriages, de-facto relationships (living in sin), inter-religious marriages, and divorce were all previously frowned upon and seen as a threat to society. Now these are all common place and accepted in society - just as same sex marriage will be. One day soon, society will look back and think what was all the fuss about with legalising same sex marriage.  Two people who
love each other (regardless of their sex) and aspire to marry, being allowed to marry can only strengthen the institution 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

**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?**

**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
Phil Browne
15 August 2013