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

In support

I believe that Scotland, and the United Kingdom have, since its inception, been at the forefront of progress in the concept of the 'Night watchman government', and that any step we, as a nation, are able to make that grants, and encourages our people to decide for themselves what is right (In this case, whether they wish to marry or not) is a step in the right direction.

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 marriage is a union of two people. Gender should not play a role in marriage, as gender is not supposed to play a role in business, education, or any other areas of life without very strong and understandable reasons, such as why treatment f

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

Neither

As I believe that people being asked to perform a marriage ceremony should always have the right to refuse on any grounds, and many religious institutions are unlikely to be supportive of marriage out-with their antiquated moral code, I believe that there needs to be a system which would allow for marriage without a religious approval, similar to present humanist marriages.

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

The system described in the bill allows all participants in a same sex marriage the right to decide if they wish to participate or not, protecting people from a situation where they would be forced to take part in something that they do not agree with.

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

In support
I am entirely in support of breaking the chains that bind people, and therefore I believe that anyone wishing to change their civil partnership to a marriage should have that right. As it stands, the current proposal seems to be leaving a rather large hole.

**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

Again, providing a greater degree of freedom, without infringing upon the rights of others can (in my opinion) only be a step in the right direction.

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

In support

Again, as ever, I am in support of allowing a greater freedom of choice.

**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

Define gender. Or rather define feminine and masculine, and without referring to a person's actual sex (i.e., what type of 'plumbing' they have installed 'downstairs') but rather the roles that the two genders play within society, and how they need be a conc.

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

There is still one major flaw in this bill, in my personal opinion. The state is an institution built by the people of the nation, for the people of the nation, paid for by the taxes collected from the people of the nation. As such, allowing any public service to have to option to opt-out of serving any member of the nation, based upon the beliefs of the individual civil servant/state school teacher or an other person employed by the government is a gross failure of the government. If a business was to allow someone to pay for their services, and then were to refuse to provide said services, it would be a breach of contract, likewise, the Scottish parliament, and all public services in Scotland exist to serve all the Scottish people, not to pick and choose who is allowed access to public services and who isn't. Private schools, and religious institutions are separate from the state and as such may be free to have their own policy, but if I should have a child who is gay, I would expect my nation to provide him/her with a full education, and with access to the same services as any other citizen. People who do not feel comfortable working for the government have the right to quit their job for personal reasons, just as I have to right to quit my job in the private sector for personal reasons (a right which I recently exercised, and will exercise again if I feel that I cannot in good conscience work for my employer) and seek work elsewhere.
Would you like to comment on the wider issue of freedom of speech?

I do not believe that this bill has any affect on freedom of speech, though the success of what was only 20 years ago a minor organisation shall hopefully embolden people to speak out for other causes that we may be ignorant of today.

Would you like to comment on any other wider issues in relation to the Bill that are not mentioned above?

Whilst the bill is very successful in aiming to liberate same sex couples, outside of the point I have already mentioned, I believe that mixed gender couples should have the right to be joined in a civil partnership if that is their choice. As it stands I believe that the current proposal is lacking in this regard.

Are you responding as...

a private individual

Hugh Custodio-Forbes
14 August 2013