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

In support

I believe this is good and timely legislation that should be enacted as soon as 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

I believe civil marriage should be offered to all citizens, regardless of gender, as it is a function of the state.

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

In support

I think this is a good thing - citizens with non-religious beliefs or no beliefs at all should be treated no differently than those with religious beliefs.

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 support both allowing celebrants to solemnise same sex and opposite sex marriages, and allowing religious celebrants to opt-in as dictated by their faith and their religious organisations. I strongly disagree that civil registrars should be allowed to opt-out, as they are delivering a state function and should not allow personal prejudices or beliefs to affect the delivery of their role.

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

In support

I am in support, although I believe civil partnerships should also be open to opposite sex couples, so that all individuals can choose from all options.

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

The tying of marriage ceremonies specifically to religious premises outside of civil registrar offices is outdated and unneeded in modern Scotland.

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

In support

If a couple wishes to remain in or enter into a civil marriage, but have it registered under a particular belief system, I believe they should be allowed to.

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

Gender (or a change in gender) should have nothing to do with the legal status of a marriage or civil partnership between two people.

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

Individuals who have concerns about same sex marriage should not be allowed to dictate whether they are permitted for all citizens. However, they should also not be forced, if they are part of a particular church or religious order, to provide them, much as Catholics are not forced to marry divorcees. The topic of same sex marriage as a religious ceremony (as opposed to a civil, state function) should be left up to each religious group to decide for themselves over time, with much reflection. But as a state function, it must be accessible to all.

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

People should be free to speak their minds on any topic. However, they should not use their membership of a particular religious group or any factor about themselves as a foil to discussion - if someone says something that other people believe to be bigoted or homophobic, they should not be surprised when they are criticised. Freedom of speech does not equal freedom from consequence or criticism.

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

I believe this is good legislation, long overdue. I am heartened that the Scottish Government has taken a lead on this topic.

Are you responding as...

a private individual

David Goodman
14 August 2013