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

In support

The National Union of Journalists has long supported Equality and same sex marriage is absolutely essential if we are to end discrimination against LGBT people, while providing safeguards for religious institutions who do not wish to conduct such civil ceremonies.

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

In support

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

In support

It is absolutely essential that 'belief celebrants' are allowed to conduct such ceremonies, to ensure those such as the Humanist Society can celebrate same sex 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

If there was a blanket ban, then that would be inequitable and against the wishes of many religious organisations who wish to be able to solemnise both opposite and same sex marriage.

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

In support

It would be inequitable for only same sex couples to be allowed access to civil partnerships, while opposite sex couples are not. If same sex marriage legislation is enacted, then there has to be a review of civil partnership legislation, to examine whether opposite sex couples are being treated in an inequitable manner.

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

Civil marriages - whether same sex or not - should be conducted in any reasonable place, as agreed between the couple and the registrar. There should not be a blanket ban on same sex marriages taking place in religious premises, if the organisation involved is in support of solemnising same sex marriages.

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

In support

If institutions agree, then it would be inequitable to oppose this through legislation.

**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?**

Neither

**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 absolutely no evidence that the introduction of same sex marriage will harm so-called 'traditional' marriage, just as Civil Partnerships did not lead to the destruction of Scottish society. It is incumbent on the state to legislate for the equality of all. Marriage is a civil contract which binds, through law, couples together - allowing marriage for one section of society and not the other, is patently unjust. Scotland has the opportunity to prove once and for all that we are a fair nation, which values above all else, equality and fraternity and the chance for loving couples to have their union fully recognised by the state.

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

We already have legislation in place to deal with any comments considered to be inciteful. People should express - and respect - the opinions of everyone in this debate.

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

**Are you responding as...**

Trade Union (NUJ Scotland, Chair)

James Doherty
Chair
National Union of Journalists
8 August 2013