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

In support

All people should be treated equally and with respect and have the same opportunity as everyone else to live a happy life in a committed relationship with all distinctions removed so that one group of people does not get ostracised or made to feel different simply by how they were born.

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

In support

The benefits of marriage are plain to see, removing distinctions or offering the choice between a civil partnership and full marriage for LGBT people would enhance the lives of so many Scots and reassure them that they are fully equal citizens.

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

In support

A religion is an organised belief system that is not based on any actual documented evidence to support their claims, not one single religion has ever in modern history been able to prove a single supernatural event, thus I don't believe a large group of

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

Except I personally believe that anyone of a particular faith should be guaranteed a same sex marriage, why should we force the majority of Muslim, evangelical or Church of England (who can't opt in) to either change their faith or not get a marriage because their religious leaders are bigoted against LGBT people in the majority of cases within these conservative ideologies?

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

In support

If people prefer to call their commitment marriage, then so be it, perhaps they will have an additional ceremony enhancing the economy.
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

A religious institution is not required to make a life long commitment, speaking inside a church is no different to speaking outside one.

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

In support

We should not deny people of a particularly conservative faith civil partnerships in the same way we should not effectively deny them marriages simply because the registrar opts out.

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

That's a horrible practise that should be stricken out of the law ASAP for the heart breaking discrimination that it throws on the transgendered, married, community.

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

everyone is entitled to a view, however when that view is a negative one about a group of people that is called discrimination. If we are talking about protections for people who hold such views then what about protecting people who believe that believe interracial marriage is wrong? or that all immigrants should "go home"? replace the word gay/same sex marriage with interracial marriage/black rights/womens rights/minority rights and a whole host of other things and suddenly the idea of giving these people "protections" is not so palatable for some reason. Allowing these people protections to opt out of dealing with LGBT people is condoning this discrimination. Can a preist/pastor/Registrar opt out of marrying a black man and white women, no. can they opt out of marrying people for any other reason, no. Why should we afford them this condonement of their discrimination? We shouldn't.

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

Freedom of speech should be celebrated, it is a crowning achievement as a country which provides checks and balances against tyranny, bigotry, exploitation and corruption. discrimination should be stamped out. free speech can become discrimination when it is used against a person on assumption and prejudice, and not against an idea. This is why one can make any comment about any prophet, book or dogma without fear or reprisal, but turn that same scrutiny against a follower
of that prophet, the author of that book (with threatening and unfounded statements) then we can class it is discrimination.

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

It is time as a country that we take that step to base every bill and law we make on principles based on secular, equality and reason based arguments.

Are you responding as...

an academic
a private individual

Stephen Welsh
14 August 2013