

Ben Whitchurch

Dear Panel,

In response to the panel's request for evidence, I would like to submit that I am against these proposed changes to the marriage laws. Specifically, I note that there are no provisions in the proposed changes which would protect private citizens, government employees or businesses who are conscientious objectors to same-sex marriage.

In communities where same-sex marriage laws have been passed, without appropriate protection for conscientious objectors, individuals and businesses have been targeted and intimidated simply because they choose to live by their moral convictions and cannot participate in a Same-Sex wedding. These convictions that can't be written-off lightly, since they are shared by billions of people around the globe and are articulated in nearly every major faith tradition—including that of the established church here in Jersey.

Before this drastic change to the definition of marriage is debated in the States, protections for conscientious objectors should be passed.

Thanks,

Ben