

Anonymous 1

As a gay man, planning to marry my fiancé next year, I welcome the parliamentary approval of the introduction of equal marriage in Jersey and, having read the proposed legislation, believe it delivers what the States sought when they voted through the proposition.

As much as the proposed law covers myriad areas of marriage, I am confining my submission to the specific area of equal marriage.

Quite simply, and rather boringly when you consider it, my view is that two people who love each other should be able to marry. And that two people, who happen to be of the same sex, should be afforded the same rights in law as a heterosexual couple.

This is purely a civil matter, not a religious matter. Whether or not a religious institution wishes to conduct an equal marriage ceremony is their business, and this law does not and should not seek to compel them to do so.

If I was trying to explain my stance in the simplest possible terms, I ask people to substitute the word gay for the word black. You then see the discrimination that comes with any law that prevents somebody from being allowed to do something which is afforded to other people.

I note the review also seeks to consider the effect of the introduction of equal marriage on discrimination legislation. I am working on the assumption that its inclusion is based on the "gay cake" arguments I've seen raised in recent weeks.

My view here is, again, simple. There is no problem that would be caused and no problem that would need fixing with the introduction of equal marriage.

The infinitesimally tiny number of cases that have come to light elsewhere have had political motives and do not actually represent reality.

If I wanted a wedding cake, and a supplier I approached didn't want to supply said cake on - for example - religious grounds, I wouldn't want to do business with them. I'd rather my money went to somebody who would do a good job and who wants my business.

It's as straight forward as that.

But to amend discrimination legislation to give someone a legal right to actively discriminate against me is not a correct application of law. Again, substitute the word gay with the word black to see my point.

The law should play no part in preventing people from holding views, even abhorrent views. Likewise, the law should not be used to protect people with discriminatory views.

The reality is that any fearmongering about the rights of bakers being threatened is exactly that: fearmongering. It is simply not a problem that needs fixing.

For evidence of that, look to England, look to Guernsey. Bakers happily bake. Same sex couples happily get married. The world has not stopped revolving on its axis.

I hope this submission is helpful.

I am more than happy to be contacted if you require any further information or clarification. I am more than happy for my submission to be published, but I would ask that my personal details are not.