



(For official use only)
PUBLIC PETITION NO.

PE1413

PLEASE REFER TO GUIDANCE NOTES AT THE BACK OF THIS FORM.

1. Name of petitioner
Amy King
2. Petition title
Preserving marriage
3. Petition text
Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to make no changes to the current definition of marriage, as being a union between one man and one woman, regardless of what happens in Westminster.
4. Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition
<p>I have responded to the Scottish Government consultation on the Registration of Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriage, and encouraged others to do so.</p> <p>Because the Scottish Parliament's online petition system was unavailable at the time I needed it, I collected signatures for this petition using an external online system, at http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/marriagescotland/. The wording was exactly the same as this petition, and having done my best to remove duplicates and signatures from other countries, the total number of signatures is 2,587. This includes 117 who requested to sign the petition on paper. All of these signatures are attached.</p>
5. Petition background information
<p>The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) survey quoting that 61% of Scots support same-sex marriage was loaded in favour of that outcome. Using the language of "discrimination" and "positive action" to refer to disagreement with same-sex marriage and legalising same-sex marriage respectively clearly implies that the correct and desirable answer to the question "Gay or lesbian couples should have the right to marry one another if they want to," is to agree.</p> <p>Furthermore, it seems woefully remiss that the SSA survey didn't assess the difference in attitudes to civil partnerships and marriages. The published figure has been freely used by homosexual rights activists and the media as justification to introduce same-sex marriage. However, a report entitled "Civil Partnerships Five Years On", published in September 2011 showed that less than 50% of the public supported same-sex marriage.</p>

The legal benefits of marriage are already available to same-sex couples through civil partnerships. There were only 465 civil partnerships registered in Scotland last year compared to 28,480 marriages. Of the number of couples who entered into civil partnerships, how many of them would have chosen to be married in a church had that option been available? Marriage should not be redefined for the whole of society given the tiny percentage of society actually affected by the issue.

The introduction of same-sex marriage is being presented in the media and by some lobbyists and politicians as something that does not affect most of us. Any opposing it are accused by pro-homosexual spokespeople such as Liberal Democrat leader [Willie Rennie](#) of intolerance, and of trying to impose our views on others, who are not trying to impose their views on us. In reality, this change would have huge implications for what is taught and promoted in schools and in wider society. Schools would be expected to promote same-sex marriage to children as equal to man/woman marriage, creating confusion and going against the wishes of many parents. Materials such as Stonewall's "Education for All" teacher's pack may become compulsory. (This pack for primary schools recommends pro-homosexual story books such as "King and King", a story about two princes who marry. The pack suggests such books could be acted out by children as plays. A head teacher on the accompanying DVD says that pupils should be taught to be resilient to the values of their parents and grandparents.)

It is not unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that same-sex marriage is an effort by gay rights campaigners to impose their views forcibly on the rest of society. Those who oppose same-sex marriage do not seek to impose their views on same-sex couples – defending marriage does not affect the freedom of others to think, believe and act as they choose.

If marriage can be redefined in this way, it could then be further changed to allow polygamy. For example, Canada has legalised same-sex marriage, and litigation is now under way in one Canadian province to legalise polygamy. The eventual result could be sexual chaos where any group of adults of any gender can claim the legal rights of a family. This shows how, whether intentionally or not, same-sex marriage is in reality a wedge that will clear a path for further social engineering.

It is well documented that social outcomes for both parents and children in families built on man/woman marriages are better than those in any other family type. For example, Chapter 3 of *Stand for the Family* by Sharon Slater references a plethora of US research, too lengthy to be included here, that only scratches the surface of the available research. In the interests of clarity I will broadly paraphrase two of the points here as examples, and reference their page numbers in the book where interested parties can find more specifics.

(p 33/34) *When compared to the children of non-married parents, children of married parents are safer, healthier, happier and more successful.*

(p 37) *When compared to heterosexual men, men who engage in homosexual behaviour suffer higher rates of domestic violence, suicide, STDs, and mental illness.*

UK research such as *Broken Homes & Battered Children* by Robert Whelan backs up the notion that children are safest when raised by both natural parents, who are married to each other.

Homosexual rights activists will argue that research showing that marriage is best for children can include same-sex marriage and is therefore an argument in favour of it. However, since there are no studies testing same-sex couples in this way, this cannot be assumed, particularly in light of the poor social outcomes for homosexual adults that are clearly documented, as referenced above. At the very least, we should be conducting studies comparing families based on civil partnerships to those based on married and cohabiting heterosexual couples, before coming to any such conclusion.

Popular culture should not be allowed to take precedence over these important facts. These are the statistics that the Government should be studying and considering – and the reasons why responsible governments should preserve the current definition of marriage. Because man/woman marriage makes for a more productive society, redefining it would ultimately cost the taxpayer in many ways, not to mention the expense of introducing unnecessary legislation at a time of economic crisis.

The petitioner questions what right the Government has to form an opinion on same-sex marriage before consulting the people it serves. For Health Secretary Miss Sturgeon and first minister Alex Salmond to publicly say that they tend towards the view that same-sex marriages should be introduced, prior to the consultation responses being analysed, is a concern. Very recently it has been in the news that the government is now considering plans to legislate for civil partnerships to take place on religious premises, also before the consultation responses have been analysed, and in spite of the fact that there are only 6 venues saying that they would want to register. The petitioner seeks reassurance that responses opposing the Government's stated position will be taken seriously.

The petitioner also questions the Government's apparent intention to take into account the responses of non-Scottish citizens in a Scottish consultation. It seems strange that the SNP Government with one hand are saying that the Scottish people should be independent, and with the other hand inviting foreigners to influence Scotland's policy. There is also the question of the cost of processing thousands of additional responses for this consultation, and the cost of setting this precedent for all future consultations.

Many Scots find the consultation process too difficult and/or time consuming, but would want to be supportive of man/woman marriage. The petitioner has received feedback that some people found the consultation questions were confusingly worded, and the process unnecessarily onerous. This petition, as a simple statement that they were able to easily add their name to, serves to give them a voice.

Crucially, support of man/woman marriage does not imply hatred of any other person for their lifestyle choice – the suggestion of the government commissioned SSA survey that to support man/woman marriage is to hold a "discriminatory attitude" is a serious threat to freedom of speech.

6. Do you wish your petition to be hosted on the Parliament's website as an e-petition?
NO
7. Closing date for e-petition
8. Comments to stimulate on-line discussion