

THE LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Prime Minister,

We write jointly as leaders of Britain's major faiths, representing many millions of people. We strongly oppose the Same Sex Marriage Bill which if enacted will affect all those of faith and those with none.

We are disappointed that the Government has failed to engage in meaningful debate with the many different faith communities in Britain. It has wrongly assumed that opposition to the redefinition of marriage is confined to a small number of Christians. In particular during the Committee stage of the Bill, faith leaders from other religions, races and creeds were not consulted.

We are deeply concerned that this legislation is being rushed through Parliament with wholly inadequate scrutiny. We can see no objective reason for haste. The shortened parliamentary timetable, whilst legal, goes against the traditional British spirit of fairness. It seems to have been designed to curtail debate and prevent amendments.

The haste with which this legislation is being driven through Parliament and the failure to talk to all religions will mean that the problems which we have repeatedly highlighted will be written into law with serious and harmful consequences for the health of society, family life, and human rights such as freedom of religion and of speech.

We are unconvinced by the safeguards upon which your Government have placed such emphasis. Some of Britain's most eminent scholars and lawyers emphatically say that these are legally unsustainable. Moreover they are seriously limited in their scope. They do not protect or apply to those who work in either the public or private sectors. They will not protect the teacher or the parent who, for religious, or philosophical reasons, supports the current definition of marriage. Already we have seen cases of those who back traditional marriage being sacked or demoted. These consequences of the proposed legislation are clearly unacceptable.

We understand that you have personally invested significant political capital in seeking to get this legislation onto the statute book despite its absence from your manifestos. However, it is surely clear that there are significant problems with this legislation which require further scrutiny and probably amendment. We therefore urge you to pause so that this may take place.

Because of its serious flaws we will continue to resist this proposed legislation and to highlight its injustice and unfairness. It creates a two-tier form of marriage in one of which the importance of consummation, procreation and the welfare of children, as well as issues such as adultery have been ignored, and devalues the meaning of marriage itself.

Marriage between a man and a woman is the fundamental building block of human society. These proposals would radically undermine the nature and place of the family in our society. We cannot believe that this is what you intend and therefore ask you to pause before taking such a damaging step.

Yours sincerely,

1. Bishop Doye Agama, Presiding Bishop, Apostolic Pastoral Congress
2. [Mr Omar Ali, President of the Federation of Student Islamic Societies \(FOSIS\)](#)
3. Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop, Coptic Orthodox Church, UK
4. [Mr Mohammed Asif, Federation of Muslim Organisations, Redbridge](#)
5. Mr John Beard, Buddhist
6. Mr James Bogle QC, Vice-Chairman of the Catholic Union
7. Mr Ashraf Chowdery, Chairman, Association of Muslim Schools
8. Dr Khurshid Drabu CBE, Chairman, Medina Mosque Trust
9. Dr Ahmed Al Dubyan, Director General, Islamic Culture Centre & Regent's Park Mosque
10. Rev Canon Ben Enwuchola Anglican Chaplain to the Nigerian Community
11. Mrs Sarah Finch, Member of General Synod
12. Shaykh Suliman Gani, Imam, Tooting Islamic Centre
13. Dr Lee Gatiss, Director, Church Society
14. Rev John Glass, General Superintendent, Elim Pentecostal Churches
15. Bishop Creswell Green, Chair Joint Council of Anglo-Caribbean Churches, General Overseer of the Latter-Rain Outpouring Revival Ministries
16. Shaykh Dr. Haitham al-Haddad, Executive Director, MRDF
17. Dr Omer El-Hamdoon, President of the Muslim Association of Britain
18. Rev George Hargreaves, Founder of the Christian Party
19. Bishop Paul Hendricks, Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Southwark & Co-Chairman of the Christian Muslim Forum
20. Bishop Michael Hill, Anglican Bishop of Bristol

21. Maulana Shamsul Hoque, Chair, Council of Mosques Tower Hamlet
22. Rev James Hunt Rector, Bishops Waltham
23. Mrs Rebecca Hunt, Barrister
24. Shaykh Dr Musharraf Hussain, Chief Imam, Karimia Institute
25. Dr Hussein Jiwa, President of the Council of European Jamaats
26. Pastor Jean Bosco Kanyemesha, Congolese Pastorship UK
27. Dr A.Majid Katme, Islamic Medical Association
28. Mr Dilowar Khan, President, Islamic Forum of Europe
29. Syed Yousif Al Khoei, Director, Al Khoei Foundation
30. The Venerable Michael Lawson, Former Archdeacon of Hampstead
31. Mrs Susie Leafe, Member of General Synod
32. Rabbi Natan Levy
33. Archbishop Bernard Longley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham
34. Bishop Patrick Lynch, Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Southwark
35. Apostle Caleb Mackintosh, General Overseer, Bibleway Churches (UK)
36. Maulana Sarfraz Madni, Chairman, Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board (MINAB)
37. Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra, Co-Chairman of the Christian Muslim Forum
38. Shaykh Shams Adduha Muhammad, Principal Ebrahim College
39. Mr Farooq Murad, Secretary General, The Muslim Council of Britain
40. Dr Mohammed Naseem, Chairman, Birmingham Central Mosque
41. Bishop Michael Nazir Ali, Former Bishop of Rochester
42. Mr Ade Omooba, Christian Concern
43. Archbishop F.N.Onyuku-Opokiri, Born Again Christ Healing Church International
44. Mr Yusuf Patel, Founder, SREIslamic
45. Pastor Pete Pennant, Lighthouse Church, Birmingham
46. Rev Paul Perkin, Chairman, Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, UK and Ireland
47. Shaykh Abdul Qayum, Senior Imam, East London Mosque
48. Mr Munawer Rattansey, Vice-President, the World Federation of KSIMC
49. Maulana Shahid Raza, Chief Imam, Leicester Central Mosque
50. Mr Giles Rowe, Catholic Forum
51. Sir Iqbal Sacranie, Chairman, Al-Risalah Trust
52. Mr John Smeaton, National Director, SPUC
53. Bishop Keith Sinclair, Anglican Bishop of Birkenhead
54. Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohinder Singh, Chairman, Guru Nanak Nishkam Sewak Jatha'
55. Archbishop Peter Smith, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Southwark
56. Archbishop George Stack, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cardiff
57. Rev John Stevens, Director of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches
58. Canon Dr Chris Sugden, Executive Secretary, Anglican Mainstream
59. Prebendary Rod Thomas, Chairman of Reform
60. Rev Dr Simon Vibert, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford
61. Bishop Alfred Williams General Overseer Christ faith Tabernacle International Churches C.C.

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