



House of Commons
 Friday 16 January 2015
REPORT STAGE PROCEEDINGS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (RELIGIOUS ETC. OBSERVANCES) BILL

NEW CLAUSE

Sir Edward Leigh

Withdrawn NC1

To move the following Clause—

“Judaeo-Christian tradition

In observing the provisions in this Act, councils shall keep in mind the pre-eminence of the Judaeo-Christian tradition as the historical foundation of the United Kingdom.”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Withdrawn 5

Clause 1, page 1, line 5, at beginning insert “Subject to section 138BB”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not moved 8

Clause 1, page 1, line 5, after “England”, insert “or Wales”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 1

Clause 1, page 1, line 5, after “may”, insert “if it has been resolved by a two thirds majority of the members of the council, in a meeting called specifically for that purpose”

Philip Davies

Not called 12

Clause 1, page 1, line 5, leave out “may” and insert “shall”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 3

Clause 1, page 1, line 8, at end add—

Local Government (Religious etc. Observances) bill, *continued*

“() in no case may more than three minutes be devoted to business under this section.”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 9

Clause 1, page 1, line 10, after “England”, insert “or Wales”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 4

Clause 1, page 1, line 15, at end add—

“(4) Subsections (1) and (2) do not reduce the obligations of the authority not to discriminate against—

(a) those with religious beliefs different from those supported or espoused in the prayers or other observances referred to in this section; or

(b) those without religious beliefs,

and to treat them equally in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, section 149.”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 6

Clause 1, page 1, line 17, at beginning insert “Subject to section 138BB”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 10

Clause 1, page 1, line 17, after “England”, insert “or Wales”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 2

Clause 1, page 1, line 17, after “may”, insert “if it has been resolved by a two thirds majority of the members of the council, in a meeting called specifically for that purpose”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 11

Clause 1, page 2, line 2, after “England”, insert “or Wales”

Mr James Arbuthnot

Not called 7

Clause 1, page 2, line 7, at end insert—

“138BB Local referendum on religious observances

- (1) If a local authority wishes to use powers under sections 138A or 138B, it must obtain the consent of the electorate through a local referendum.
- (2) The referendum is to be held on a date decided by the local authority and may be held on the ordinary day of local elections.
- (3) The persons entitled to vote in the referendum are those who, on the day of the referendum would be entitled to vote as electors at an election for councillors of the local authority.
- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision as to the conduct of referendums under this section.
- (5) If a local authority wishes to use powers under section 138A, the question to be asked is of the form “The council of the (County/City/Borough/District) of ____

Local Government (Religious etc. Observances) bill, *continued*

- _____ proposes to hold religious observances as part of the formal business of council meetings. Do you agree that the council should be allowed to do this?”
- (6) If a local authority wishes to use powers under section 138B, the question to be asked is of the form “The council of the (County/City/Borough/District) of _____ proposes to support and/or be formally represented at religious events. Do you agree that the council should be allowed to do this?”
- (7) If the majority of persons voting in the referendum under either subsection (5) or (6) approve of the proposal, the local authority may use the powers under the respective sections 138A or 138B for four years from the calendar date of the referendum.
- (8) In no event may a further referendum be held within four years of the day on which a referendum under this section has been held.”

Bill read the third time, and passed.
