

November/December, 2025

Zonta USA Caucus

Advocacy Bulletin



ZONTA
INTERNATIONAL
USA CAUCUS

The USA Caucus is a place for clubs and districts in the US to align on key issues and provides a platform for coordinated advocacy actions within the US.

International Day of the Girl

Some much needed hope: In the aftermath of the International Day of the Girl, Victoria Walker, Policy Analyst, U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, has prepared a [Policy Brief: Everything She Can Be: Honoring the Power of Girls Everywhere](#). Ms Walker “highlights the resilience and leadership of girls and young women, especially those in humanitarian crises, where they face immense challenges but continue to fight for education, safety, and equality.” She reports: “I have gained endless inspiration from the girls and young women I have met in communities across the United States and around the world. Their courage in the face of conflict, violence, and discrimination reinforces for me that change is not only possible—it’s happening..” Keep up the fight!

Watch and share an inspiring [video](#) on the topic from UN Women. And read a [blog](#) from Beverley Francis-Gibson, CEO of [Together Women Rise](#) on what IDG truly demands of us: not celebration, but a commitment to rise to meet the moment and to step up for girls when others step back.

[Denise Parrish](#), Chair of the Ending Violence Against Women Committee of the Caucus has written an excellent op-ed for her local paper regarding the continuing challenges for girls and women and is happy for people to use whatever you might like out of it. Contact Denise for a copy.

Advocacy Tools

The ZI [website](#) now has very easy to use advocacy tools including an explanation of What is Advocacy, policies and guidelines, information on the four focus areas, shared moments of activism and new initiatives, toolkits, Zonta Advocacy Series webinars position papers and statements, training modules and many other resources.

Child Marriage

The National Coalition to End Child Marriage is working to prepare for the next legislative session in CA, IL, CO, HI, MD, and TX (2027). If you have connections to organizations in any of these states and/or want to help with these efforts contact [Becca Powell](#) at Unchained at Last or [Therese Hartwell](#) or [Katherine Cleland](#). If you don't know where your state stands on child marriage, check on Unchained's [website](#). If your state has not ended child marriage consider hosting a [postcard party](#) asking your legislators to propose and pass 18, no exceptions bills. Unchained makes it easy.

On Nov 12 Unchained hosted “The Golden State’s Child Marriage Problem” with Chelsea Clinton and Fraidy Reiss discussing CA’s failure to end child marriage. The Livestream can be viewed [HERE](#). Fast forward to minute 15.

With a focus on child trafficking in relation to the Epstein files, child marriage is also getting increased attention. Check out a gift article, [Why Do We Allow Child Marriage in America?](#) in The NY Times by Nicholas Kristof and a [post](#) by Qasim Rashid as examples and share.

[CONNECTER](#), an organization that invests in women and girls by elevating their status through projects, stories, and film, hosts an annual film festival. High school and college students submit original short films focused on critical issues affecting women and girls. Check out the films [HERE](#), in particular [Not Your Bride: A Woman's Constitution](#) which tells the story of Ruvimbo Topodzi who was married against her will at age 16. Since leaving that marriage, she has dedicated her life to ensuring that no other girls in her home country of Zimbabwe are married before 18 through advocacy, education and developing economic opportunities.

Violence Against Women

The 16 Days of Advocacy Against Gender-Based Violence takes place Nov 25, which is International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women through December 10, International Human Rights Day. This year's theme is "End digital violence against all women and girls. Join the UNiTE campaign to stop digital abuse." Learn more [HERE](#).

Join ZI for the annual virtual Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women and Girls Summit, Dec 10. There will be three sessions throughout the day and recordings will be available. Join the Summit to discuss male allyship, challenge societal norms and learn how to build a gender-based violence-free world. Invite non-Zonta members to join. Find details and register [HERE](#).

Please sign the Zonta Says NO pledge: [Petition Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women Pledge](#) and share it with friends, family, community members, business leaders and owners, local leaders, and political reps. And watch the Zonta USA Caucus FB page for posts to share with your club, district, friends, etc on each of the 16 days. Share the posts rather than reposting to amplify the Caucus.

The bipartisan Campus Accountability and Safety Act (S.2990) was re-introduced by Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) in October for the 2025-2026 Congressional Session. This bill directly mirrors the same-named act which was introduced in the previous session (S. 4962) and has been reintroduced every session since 2014! Each bill only got as far as a committee review. Now, over a decade later, it is time this bipartisan act moves forward! S.2990 would increase reporting requirements, create new resources and support services for survivors and set new notification requirements for both survivors and accused students involved in the campus disciplinary process. Use Zonta's pre-drafted [letters](#) to urge your legislators to co-sponsor and support the Campus Accountability and Safety Act (S. 2990).

According to EVERYTOWN, "Domestic violence and gun violence are deeply interconnected, impacting millions of women, families, and communities across the United States. Guns significantly increase the lethality of domestic abuse situations: Access to a firearm makes it five times more likely that an abusive partner will kill his female partner." Check out their [8 ways](#) to help prevent domestic violence.

Intimate partner violence affects people of all ages, races, ethnicities, genders and economic and religious backgrounds. In the US, an average of 24 people per minute become victims of rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner, amounting to more than 12,000,000 people over the course of a single year. Women are disproportionately the victims of domestic violence with approximately 1 in 2 women experiencing intimate partner violence or stalking during their lifetimes. The bipartisan Domestic Violence Awareness Month Resolution recognizes the urgent need for national action, expanded support services, and increased awareness for survivors and families affected and calls on Congress to support related programs Use Zonta's pre-drafted [letter](#) to urge your representative to co-sponsor and support the resolution.

The Zonta Club of Harrisburg-Hershey gathered lawmakers, anti-hunger organizations and community volunteers to raise the alarm on food insecurity in PA. Club VP Heather Jackson at the press conference in the Capitol Rotunda, called food insecurity "a root issue affecting not only hunger but domestic violence, human trafficking and other serious social problems." Read more and watch a news video [HERE](#).

During the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, Northwestern Wayne Zonta is teaming up with Biggby Coffee and KungFu Tea for the 4th year to spread awareness about domestic violence. Look for QR code on Biggby coffee sleeves that leads to local resources. Learn more [HERE](#).

Women and Leadership

Encouraging news: Bishop Sarah Mullally has been appointed the first Archbishop of Canterbury, the head bishop in the Church of England and the head of the global Anglican Communion, of which the US Episcopal Church is a member. She currently serves as the Bishop of London, and was one of the first women consecrated as bishop in the British Isles. Read more [HERE](#).

On Nov 18, ZI held its latest in their Advocacy Webseries: Women in Decision-making – Insights on Navigating Leadership Journeys, featuring ZI President, Salla Tuominen, former ZI President and Amelia Earhart Fellow, Sharon Langenbeck, and Past ZI Board Director Marguerite Akossi Mvongo. If you missed it, watch the recording [HERE](#). And explore ZI's [Leadership Tools](#) page to deepen your engagement in Zonta leadership, and share opportunities with younger generations.

Climate Justice

On November 9, the Zonta USA Caucus Zonta Says NOW Committee hosted their first Zoom book discussion on [Braiding Sweetgrass](#). Watch for future book discussions.

The [Zonta Says NOW Virtual Art Gallery](#), designed to connect us with our feelings about climate justice, features work by 45 different Zonta artists representing every continent. Submissions are being accepted now for the 2026 art work. Contact [Julie Trone](#) for more.

The next Zonta Says NOW to Gender-Equal Climate Action Intercontinental Think Tank will be Jan 11 at 10:00 pm EST Register [HERE](#).

IF YOU NEED TO CALL 911 BUT ARE SCARED TO BECAUSE OF SOMEONE IN THE ROOM

dial and ask for a pepperoni pizza. They will ask if you know you're calling 911. Say yes, and continue pretending you're making an order. They'll ask if there's someone in the room. You can ask how long it will take for the pizza to get to you, and they will tell you how far away a patrol unit is. Share this to save a life!!! Dispatchers are trained to ask specific yes or no questions..dont hang up!

Equal Rights Amendment

The ERA Coalition's new slogan in its fight for recognition of the ERA as the 28th Amendment: is "It's Our ERA: Claim the 28th Amendment." The Coalition is still focused on encouraging more Democratic co-sponsors for the bicameral resolution, S.J. Res 38 and H.J.Res.80, which would remove an arbitrary deadline for the passage of the ERA set by Congress in 1972. A total number of 218 co-sponsors are needed. Please contact as many as possible of the House members on the list below and ask them to co-sponsor the bill. If you are not in the member's district, identify yourself as from ERA NOW to avoid focus on your state of residence. The reps name is listed first, then the staff contact. The list stays updated [HERE](#). Underlined members are first-term. Others sponsored this resolution in the last Congress but have not sponsored this time.

[Adelita Grijalva](#) AZ-07--new representative
[Adam Gray](#) CA-13 Emma Vogel 202-225-1947 emma.vogel@mail.house.gov
Henry Cuellar TX-28 Hugh Bayard 202-225-1640 hugh.bayard@mail.house.gov
Robert "Bobby" Scott VA-03 Paige Schwartz 202-225-8351
paige.schwartz@mail.house.gov

[The Disrupt NOW Campaign](#) is a nationwide movement designed to advocate for women's equality and safety, combat extreme misogynist propaganda and increase feminist education. It addresses critical issues impacting women and girls across the US, such as healthcare, the economy and safety.

[RATIFIED](#), is a documentary that traces the legal, political, and deeply personal fight to enshrine gender equality in the U.S. Constitution nearly a century after the ERA was first proposed. The film brings the ERA to life through Virginia's pivotal ratification battle, led by Black women and with the support of a multi-racial, multi-generational coalition. RATIFIED debuted nationwide on PBS on October 20 and is available on the PBS app and your local PBS station.

US Women's Caucus and Other International Happenings

In preparation for CSW70 and to assist NGO's and policy makers, the US Women's Caucus has prepared a series of short policy briefs on topics related to the theme of justice for women and girls. Briefs have been completed on: [Affordable Childcare and Women's Workforce Participation](#); [Technology-Facilitated GBV](#); [Sex Trafficking](#); [Education Justice](#); [Paid Family Leave and Benefits in the US](#); [LGBTQ+ Youth in the K-12 Education System](#); [Law Enforcement Responses to Crimes Against Women](#); [The Rights of Migrant Women in the United States](#); [Barriers to Justice for Indigenous Women and Girls](#), and [CEDAW- A framework Guaranteeing Women's Access to Justice](#).

The Caucus is initiating a youth group for young women 16-24 to come together to learn more about the UN, the CSW and advocating for gender equality. The group will include training and mentoring opportunities and will be a place for young women to use their voices. The Caucus is actively looking for members for the group; if you know a young girl who might be interested contact Pam Perraud at perraudp@yahoo.com.

View a short video entitled ["The UN at 80: What has it Achieved?"](#) highlighting the UN's accomplishments. Despite these achievements, the UN is facing an existential crisis. Many member states including Russia and China are delaying or not paying their dues. Right now, the US, the largest contributor to the UN, is \$1.5 Billion in arrears. The Secretary General has put forth a new plan, UN 80 to reform and reduce expenditures but many think this will not be enough to save peacekeeping and other vital services the UN performs around the world. The Caucus has signed onto the plan and others can sign [HERE](#). Things could get even worse, as U.S. funding for the UN is on the line. The House has passed a bill cutting all support for the UN's Regular Budget and IO&P account. Please take a moment TODAY and send a [message](#) to your elected officials that meeting our UN commitments is vital to global peace and security.

The Caucus invites those NGOs and individuals that support the principles of CEDAW and the Beijing Platform for Action to join us, as Friends or as Members, to share information, learn from one another, and engage in joint advocacy. Individuals can join [HERE](#) for only \$25.

The next US Women's Caucus General Membership Meeting will be held Wednesday, Dec 3 at 2:00 PM EST. In honor of the 16 Days Campaign, the special guest speakers will be Linda MacDonald and Jeanne Sarson who are reknowned experts on the issue of non-State torture. They will share some of their 33 years of research knowledge supporting women's recovery and healing as well as information about their new book "Healing- Lynn's Story- Getting My-Self Back- The Woman's Revolution." At the meeting, they will also announce the Caucus' plans for CSW70 and give updates on the Caucus's new Young Women's Advocacy Group. Register [HERE](#).

The Istanbul Convention is a human rights treaty of the Council of Europe opposing violence against women and domestic violence. The Latvian parliament ratified the Convention two years ago but was threatening to abandon it, which would have had very negative consequences for women victims of violence in Latvia. More than 67,400 citizens signed an online petition in a few days, asking that their country remain in the Convention. Thanks to the petition and other intense advocacy, the Latvian parliament listened to the people, allowing the country to continue applying the Istanbul Convention, at least until a new parliament is elected in October 2026.

Zonta International provides funds to UNFPA for gender-equitable climate adaptation projects in Madagascar. On October 20, hosted an online event, "Zonta in Madagascar: Empowering Women, Changing Lives," aimed at educating Zontians about Madagascar in general and Zonta's work there.