



**Zonta International
District 3**

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

**2011 - 2012 District 3
Legislative Advocacy and Awareness (LAA)
Summary**

Presented by:

Leslie Wright, D3 LAA Chair
Nancy Baulis, D3 LAA Lead for PA
Bobbee Cardillo, D3 LAA Lead for VA/DC

A message from the Chair:

Leslie Wright, Legislative Awareness and Advocacy (LAA), District 3, Zonta International

District 3 introduces new LEAD TO ADVOCACY

With clubs in 5 states and the District of Columbia, I realized early on that, to be effective, we needed more help. District 3 is working on a fresh approach, using LAA Leads in each state.

I know we can't reach all of the government bodies that affect our lives and expect to have any return on our investment of time and research. But with your help, we will have eyes and ears in many of our communities. We need a point person at the District level who is interested in action -- to collect information, disseminate it to the clubs, and educate our members to use their voices to express Zonta positions on issues of concern. We hope to have that capacity with the Lead project, and with the help of your club, we hope the project will become truly effective.

The new project has had a rough start, and new leads are sought in New Jersey, New York and the District of Columbia. In addition, we need the clubs to identify a point person to work with the Lead in your state to be the conduit for information -- both from and to the Lead.

It took over a year to reorganize and to develop a platform for action. Current Leads who have agreed to serve on the District LAA Committee during the last year of the biennium are: Nancy Baulis, Pennsylvania; Bobbee Cardillo, Virginia; Barbara Taylor, Maryland; and (temporarily) Karen Siegel, New York. Leads form the District 3 LAA Committee. Contact information for present leads can be found on the District 3 website and will be updated. To communicate better with the clubs directly, I recently changed my email to zidistrict3laa@gmail.com.

One problem we face as Zontians providing advocacy is that our clubs do not reach all areas of the state. The one exception in District 3 is New Jersey, but the rest of the clubs either share their state with another district or have only a few clubs in the state. The committee recognizes the need to expand our membership, and the need to work in coalition with other organizations to achieve our goals.

The issues we encourage you to follow are

1. Funding for women's programs in the local, state and national budgets
2. Family planning
3. Violence against women, including trafficking
4. Establishment of a national women's history museum

5. Ratification of CEDAW – the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
6. US Equal Rights Amendment – Virginia is the only state in the District that did not ratify the ERA.
7. Equal pay

Each club is should discuss these issues and vote on their positions, in collaboration with the lead for your state. Minutes of these decisions should be sent to me, with a copy to your Lead. Once the club takes a position on an issue the President can and should send a letter to that effect to the appropriate legislators, copied to me, your Lead, and to any coalitions which the club is working with on the issue.

This year 11 clubs reported their LAA activities. Most clubs have supported domestic violence and advocacy for anti-trafficking legislation, more have service projects or events that support these issues, but few have actually taken action to make their voices heard through legislative advocacy. Better communication is needed if we are to be truly effective.

As your District 3 Chair for Legislative Awareness and Advocacy, I invite you to become involved in this new process. This year, with budget deliberations promising to hold many women's programs hostage, we expect to need your involvement more than usual. Don't leave it up to other organizations to make a difference.

It is the hope of the LAA Committee that this handout material will be useful in your club. Please add anything else you find useful, and be sure to share your information with your Lead and with me.

Your voice counts, so Be A Voice for Zonta this next year!

This packet contains the following materials:

1. Advocacy information from ZI, District 3 Job descriptions and contact information, club job description
2. Tools: Advocacy tips; Legislative Visits; Letters to Legislators; Letters to Editors
3. Where to find ZI Positions on Issues (you can use these positions without club vote, as they have been approved at the highest level): Violence against Women; Trafficking; CEDAW and the Optional Protocol
4. Issues as prepared by the District LAA Committee: US Budget process and UN Funding; Women's History Museum; CEDAW; Family Planning; State summaries

Zonta Advocacy Definition and Policies

as adopted by the Zonta International Board 10 February 2000

as amended By the Zonta International Board 13 February 2002

Advocacy Definition

Advocacy is the expression of support for or opposition to a cause, argument or proposal. Advocacy may include influencing laws, legislation or attitudes.

Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs are urged to express themselves about and become involved in issues which:

- ⌚ improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women;
- ⌚ advance understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of executives in business and the professions; and
- ⌚ promote justice and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Advocacy Policies

Pursuant to Article III Section 2 of the Zonta International Bylaws (1998), the Zonta International Board, at its February 2000 meeting, adopted the following policies:

1. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs, shall be nonpartisan and nonsectarian.
2. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs are encouraged to support legislation submitted to a legislative body for its consideration, which advances the implementation of the Objects of Zonta and the mandates of the Beijing Declaration from the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.
3. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs will ascertain if there are other like-minded organizations or individuals researching issues regarding the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women, and form partnerships with these other organizations and individuals when appropriate.
4. Whenever it is more effective to do so, Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs will work in partnership with other organizations to educate people (including ourselves) about the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional issues which affect the lives of women and the actions we must initiate to effect a positive change.
5. When Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs host or sponsor educative activities, every effort should be made for a well-balanced presentation of the facts and viewpoints.
6. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs may register protests concerning violations of human rights with the Zonta International United Nations Committee.
 - a. Clubs shall not otherwise express positions on issues involving a country other than their own except with the prior approval of the International President through the International United Nations Chairman.
 - b. Districts shall not otherwise express positions on issues involving countries other than their own except with the prior approval of the International President through the International United Nations Chairman.
 - c. Individual Zonta members shall not otherwise express positions on issues involving a country other than their own except with prior approval of the International President through the International United Nations Chairman.
7. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs shall not advocate on behalf of or endorse a political candidate or party, or any religious denomination.
8. Zonta International, its districts, and its clubs may endorse qualified individuals for nonpartisan positions.

9. Zonta clubs may express their opinion on issues only as clubs. Zonta districts may express their opinions only as districts. The Convention may express opinions on issues on behalf of Zonta International. Between conventions, only the Zonta International Board may express opinions on issues on behalf of Zonta International. Subject to Article 6(c) individual Zonta members may express a position on issues involving a country other than their own providing they use the exact wording of the position as contained in the International President's approval given through the International United Nations Chairman. Individual members may express their personal views on issues, which have not been given prior approval by the International President, through the International United Nations Chairman, only as private citizens, but may not attribute them to a Zonta club or district or to Zonta International.
10. Districts may include guidelines for the process for determining their advocacy activity in their district rules of procedure

Zonta Protocol for Advocacy Zonta Entity	Can Sign
International President International Board	On behalf of Zonta International
District Governor	On behalf of District - only if a resolution has been passed on the subject at District Conference or if accepted by a majority of clubs voting by a mail ballot.
Club President	On behalf of Club - only if a majority decision is passed at a club meeting.
Individual Zontians	Own name only, without mention of Zonta.

Please note:

- ⌚ *Only* International President/International Board may sign on behalf of Zonta International.
- ⌚ *Only* Club President may sign on behalf of club if motion is passed by a majority of members at a club meeting. Club Boards may not make policy/pass motions or take action binding a club.
- ⌚ Governors, clubs, individuals should only advocate on matters pertaining to their own jurisdictions. Concerns regarding matters in other countries should be referred to the Chairman of the United Nations Committee. (Refer to the [Advocacy Policy](#))
- ⌚ Zonta must remain nonpartisan and nonsectarian in advocacy action and on issues.
- ⌚ Zonta Districts, Clubs and members should not sign petitions in Zonta's name.
- ⌚ Send a copy of your letter/action to the Coordinator of the [Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Committee](#).

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District 3 LAA Committee Lead Responsibilities

2010-2012

The purpose of LAA Leads is to expand the LAA efforts in state and local areas that reflect ZI's areas of interest, such as violence against women, education, health and employment. To that end, specific responsibilities include the following tasks:

- Be aware of areas that might require action in your state and advise the D3 LAA Chair. These must be areas that are agreed in ZI documents.
- Once agreed state or local action is in place, work with the clubs assigned to you to direct action.
- Contact all clubs as assigned at least one time every six (6) to eight (8) weeks for an update from the President or Committee chair. Please also ask for local action that should be reviewed.
- After contacting the clubs, email an update to the D3 LAA Chair, which will be consolidated and shared with Area Directors and the Governor.
- Be familiar with information on the District 3 website that relates to LAA and advise the Chair when there needs to be a change and what that change might be.
- Assist the LAA District 3 Chair in making sure that the Website has current committee and contact information.
- Be a resource to the Clubs by:
 - Being available to the Clubs for information relating to LAA, with presentations and information and where to locate it.
 - If time and distance allows, be a speaker if requested.
- Represent the D3 LAA Chair at meetings and coalitions that are working statewide and report back to the Chair.
- Write an article or supply information that would be interesting for the Governor's newsletter and submit that to the D3 LAA Chair for consolidation.

Zonta District 3 LAA Leads, 2010-2012

Please note that contact information for club presidents can be found on <http://www.zontadistrictthree.org/Meet%20the%20Presidents.htm>

District 3 LAA Chair: Leslie Wright, zidistrict3laa@gmail.com 917-348-0281

NY - Karen Siegel, Zonta Club of New York (temporary)

Email: drklsphd@optonline.net

Phone: 516-487-9834

Responsibilities include all Area 1 clubs

NJ - Joyce Wilson Harley, Zonta Club of Essex County (currently unconfirmed for 2011-2012)

Email: joyce_dev@hotmail.com

Phone: 862-252-9920

Responsibilities include all Area 2 clubs plus the following from Area 3: Atlantic City, Cumberland County and Tri-County

PA - Nancy Baulis, Zonta Club of Philadelphia

Email: nbaulis@verizon.net

Phone: 610-543-2117

Responsibilities include the following clubs from Areas 3: Harrisburg-Hershey and Philadelphia

DC/VA - Bobbee Cardillo, Zonta Club of Fairfax County

Email: bcardillo@cbmove.com

Phone: 703-978-5530

Responsibilities include the following clubs from Areas 3 and 4: Arlington, Fairfax County, Hampton Roads, Prince William County, Washington DC

MD - Barbara Taylor - Zonta Club of Annapolis

Office: 721 Melvin Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21401

(410)267-9114

Home: 120 Spa View Avenue

Annapolis, MD 21401

(410)267-8795

Fax: (410)267-9116

Email: bgtaylor03@verizon.net

Responsibilities include the following clubs from Areas 3 and 4: Annapolis, Baltimore, Frederick, Howard County, Charles County, Montgomery County, Prince Georges County

District 3 LAA Committee *Chair Responsibilities* 2010-2012

- Contact Leads at least one time every six (6) to eight (8) weeks for an update from the clubs.
- Email an update to Governor with an update on where we stand as a district
- Check the Zonta International website for updates and changes for the committee.
- Be a resource to the Clubs by:
 - Being available to the Clubs for information relating to your committee with presentations and information.
 - If time and distance allows, be a speaker if requested.
- Write an article or supply information that would be interesting for the Governor's newsletter.
- Make sure that the Website has current committee information.

District 3 Chair: Leslie Wright

135 Eastern Parkway #6F Brooklyn, NY 11238 Phone: 917 348 0281 Email:

ZIDistrict3LAA@gmail.com

LEGISLATIVE AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE (Source: ZI District Manual)

The district legislative awareness and advocacy committee is mandated by the Zonta International Bylaws Article XIII, Section 7 (a).

RESPONSIBILITIES

Coordinates, at the district level, activities to implement legislative awareness, advocacy and equal rights, following the guidelines established by the Zonta International Board (see Advocacy Definition and Policies on the ZI website under Member Resources/Policies) in agreement with the International LAA Committee.

Communicates

- with club LAA committee chairmen, acting as a resource on legislative awareness, advocacy and equal rights issues.
- with the International LAA Committee chairman.
- with the governor, sending the governor a copy of all correspondence sent to the club or the international chairman.

Cooperates with the district service and UN committees.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- The governor appoints the chairman and such other members of the committee as the governor deems appropriate.
- The chairman and members of the committee should be knowledgeable about the Zonta Objects and projects and the purpose and activities of Zonta International.
- The chairman and members should be familiar with e.g. the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, as well as the UN Millennium Development Goals

LAA Club responsibilities fall under the STATUS OF WOMEN SERVICE (STWS) COMMITTEE

According to the Club Manual the work of this committee encompasses:

- Zonta International service programs
 - Amelia Earhart Fellowships
 - Current International Service project(s)
 - Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarships
 - Young Women in Public Affairs (YWPA) Awards
 - Zonta International Strategies to Prevent Violence Against Women (ZISVAW)
- Local service projects
- Local Legislative Awareness and Advocacy
- Z and Golden Z Clubs (see the Z and Golden Z Club Manual)
Depending on the number of club members and other factors, clubs may have a one-member committee or establish sub-committees for all or some of the awards and projects.

Responsibilities

- Recommend action and local service and advocacy projects to support Zonta's objects, mission and goals (clubs are encouraged to consider local projects related to the ZI international service projects if appropriate)
- Coordinate club participation in local Z and Golden Z Clubs, the YWPA Program, and the Klausman Scholarships
- Coordinate programs of Zonta International and the club and events and functions to:
 - raise the awareness of status of women issues
 - provide education and development to women
 - publicize and raise funds for local status of women projects, and for ZI award programs and current international projects (it is recommended that one-third (1/3) of total funds raised be sent to Zonta International Foundation-funded service programs)
- Seek corporate sponsorship, grants, bequests and individual contributions for major projects designed to advance the status of women (or coordinate this function with a club fundraising committee)
- Consider taking action by:
 - offering support, financial or advocacy, in the effort to achieve justice, human rights and fundamental freedoms
 - taking actions in keeping with Legislative Awareness and Advocacy guidelines and forming partnerships with other organizations for specific advocacy issues (see Advocacy Guidelines, Section 13)

- Keep club members informed of the accomplishments of women and of the activities of local women's organizations
 - Provide self development and training programs for club members that enhance their legal, political, economic, educational, health or professional status

Other potential areas of action

- Women's rights under the law, women in executive positions in business, equality of educational opportunity, women in politics, women's health, portrayal of women in the media, women as caregivers, women and credit

Responsibilities of the Club Committee LAA Chair

- Establish the goals for the committee in cooperation with the club president and board, and aligned with Zonta's mission
- Report to the club board and the club regularly about progress
- Report to the district committee chairman as required and copy the club president and district LAA lead
- Schedule regular meetings to discuss how committee goals will be met, with adequate notice of details, to any committee members and the president and prepare an agenda
- Give each member of the committee some responsibility and encourage each member to contribute ideas and suggestions
- Adhere to the approved committee budget
- Work with other club committees and the club board to prepare a club calendar of events and meetings (see Section 7)

Responsibilities of the Committee Member

- Attend committee meetings and participate in committee discussions and decisions
- Accept assignments and responsibilities
- Support committee projects and decisions

Source: ZI Club Manual

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Advocacy Tips

Advocacy is all about action. Speaking out on important issues – in person, on the phone, via letters, faxes, eMails, or phone calls, as an individual or in a group – is part of the democratic process. Make the most of the opportunity.

- Do your homework. Learn as much as possible about the issue of concern.
- Choose the method that is most comfortable for you. There are many ways to make your opinions known. The important thing is to do it.
- Have a clear, focused purpose for your action. Address one issue at a time. And use the facts. The more prepared you are, the more persuasive you can be.
- Be specific about what you want to achieve. What do you want your senator, representative, or other public official to do?
- Communicate as a constituent. Show the legislator or official specifically how his or her constituency is affected by or concerned about the issue.
- Be courteous and reliable. Do not promise what you can not deliver in terms of help or information. Leave your contact information. And always follow up on requests for additional materials or further clarification.

Legislative Visits

Visiting a member of Congress – in Washington DC or in a hometown office – is the most personal and effective way to communicate your views. It is also true for visiting your state senators and representatives in the Capital or at home, and for visiting local-elected officials.

- Determine if you want to visit your legislator's Capitol or local office.
- Call for a calendar to confirm your appointment options.
- Schedule a specific appointment by phone. A written request may be required. Tell the staff member the number of people attending and the issue(s) of interest.
- Be prompt. And if the legislator or official is late, be patient and flexible.
- Do not be disappointed if the meeting is with a staff person. There is great value in education and building a relationship with the key staff members on issues.
- Be prepared to speak confidently on as many, but not more than, three issues.
- Bring concisely and clearly written materials outlining your position and leave them with the person you are visiting.
- Follow up the meeting with a "thank you" letter outlining what was covered and reiterating your goals.

Letters to Legislators:

The written word is very powerful. Congressional staffers read, log, and report on input they receive especially from constituents. Letters, faxes, and eMails are all valuable way of communicating with legislators – but eMails are an effective way to weigh in when time is of the essence.

Use trusted websites to send an email on selected issues. Sample letters have been created, but you may adapt the message to personalize it or include additional information. You will also find sample emails/letters on the Zonta International website. We encourage you to use these.

If you are writing an email of your own, clearly state your facts and your purpose. Address only one issue, keep the message concise, and if possible, include personal examples of why you support/oppose the issue.

You may also mail a letter directly to your legislators but its delivery will be significantly slower that via email and may miss the critical window of opportunity to impact urgent decisions. Faxing is another way to get you letters to legislators quickly. Addresses, telephone and fax numbers for your legislators are available through **the Zonta International website and other trusted sources.**

You may also call your legislators via the Capitol switchboard at 202.224.3121. As with letters be clear, concise, and prepared to leave your contact information.

If you do not know how to contact your state officials, please contact your lead for information about how that might be done. Always coordinate your action with your respective LAA lead so we can know what your action has been.

Letters to Editors

- Letters to the editor are still an effective way to communicate about an issue to the general public.
- Find a 'hook.' Most papers prefer letters written in response to an editorial, column, or new story that recently appeared in that paper. It is also useful to link the issue to current events.
- Be timely. The quicker the response to a piece, the better.
- Be succinct. Most papers limit the length of letters. If specific limits are not mentioned in the paper or on the website, call and ask.
- Research the topic. The letter should express an opinion, but it will be much stronger with facts, particularly if it is a rebuttal to a recent piece. Personal examples are also very powerful.
- Know the audience. Read past letters to the editor and become familiar with what the paper typically prints. It is much more difficult to be published in a metropolitan daily newspaper than in a neighborhood weekly. Try to relate the letter/issue to the local community.
- Submit the letter to one newspaper. Letters to the editor should be specific. Sending the same letter to multiple outlets dilutes the message and irritates the editors.
- Identify yourself. Include your name and your affiliation or an organization, if appropriate, to be published with your letter. If you are writing on behalf of an organization, make sure that you have the organization's support for your point of view and permission to speak in their name. For the editor's information only (not to be published), include your complete contact information.
- Send a copy of your letter and clips of printed letters to the LAA Chair for the district.

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HERE IS INFORMATION ABOUT SOME OF THE ISSUES WHERE ZI HAS A POSITION. PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

CEDAW 2010-2012: TOP PRIORITY

When you go to the ZI website here is an example of what you will find. We are attaching this because CEDAW is a priority issue. You should have this information available to understand the issue yourself as you will need to communicate it to your club and perhaps to others.

Information & Resources on CEDAW

Explanation of CEDAW | [pdf](#)

CEDAW Myths & Facts | [pdf](#)

CEDAW Works! | [pdf](#)

Recognizing Rights, Promoting Progress | [pdf](#)

(courtesy of International Center for Research on Women) This report, which draws material from numerous UN reports and documents, is an excellent source of information about the positive impact CEDAW has had on nations around the world.

www.cedaw2011.org

Zonta International and CEDAW

Zonta International CEDAW Signon Letter November 2010 | [pdf](#)

Zonta International Statement in Support of Ratification of CEDAW November 2010 | [pdf](#)

Contact Your US Senator

Contact Information for US Senators | [pdf](#)

Tips for Calling your Senator | [pdf](#)

Template Letters to Senator Urging Ratification of CEDAW

[Template #1](#)

[Template #2](#)

[Template #3](#)

[Template #4](#)

[Template #5](#)

Club/District Draft CEDAW Resolution

Club Resolution Template | [doc](#)

District Resolution Template | [doc](#)

Because the ZI statements are in pdf format they could not be copied here, but please use the following for reference:

LEGISLATIVE AWARENESS & ADVOCACY TOOLS

<http://www.zonta.org/MemberResources/Tools/AdvocacyTools.aspx>

Committee Responsibilities

- Engage actively in LAA activities to improve the status of women globally.
- Develop resources to assist clubs and members to be effective advocates in their communities.
- Report on successful advocacy outcomes through the Zonta International website and to members directly.
- Promote service projects through linking of outcomes to inform about the status of women, thus emphasizing advocacy through service.
- Work closely with the Zonta International United Nations Committee.

[CEDAW 2010-2012](#)

Women and Climate Change | [pdf](#) **New July 2011**

Women and Climate Change Resources | [pdf](#) **New July 2011**

Women in Parliament in 2010 (Inter-Parliamentary Union) | [pdf](#)

Legislative Reform to Support the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (UNICEF) | [pdf](#)

CEDAW Country Reports and Possible Advocacy Actions

Zonta and CEDAW Signatures/Reports - Current to 51st Session (2012) | [pdf](#) **New July 2011**

Potential Advocacy Actions RE CEDAW Reports' Contents, Late Submission and Where Optional Protocol Not Signed/Ratified | [pdf](#) **New July 2011**

Policies

Advocacy Policy | [pdf](#)

Affiliation Policy | [pdf](#)

Actions this Biennium will help Zontians to:

Link Zonta's Objects (a) and (c) to CEDAW Articles

Advocacy Framework | [pdf](#) | [ppt](#)

Link Advocacy with service and ensure that these activities focus on Zonta's primary Objects

Advocacy/Service Project Scorecard | [pdf](#) | [ppt](#)

Establish *when* it is appropriate to take actions and at *what level*

Advocacy - When to Take Action and at What Level | [pdf](#)

Describe how advocacy should proceed

Advocacy Process Checklist | [pdf](#)

Applying Zonta's Scorecard to 2008-2010 International Service and ZISVAW Projects

ISP and ZISVAW Scorecards | [ppt](#)

Zonta Countries CEDAW Signature/Ratification Report | [pdf](#) Updated March 2010

This is a list of Zonta Countries (in alphabetical order), showing the date on which they signed/ratified CEDAW and the Optional Protocol, their latest Country Report to CEDAW and any NGO/Shadow Reports.

The last column needs your assistance in finding any other NGO or "Shadow" reports. If you do find any which link to the **latest** report for your country, please email details (preferably a URL or electronic copy) to the LAA Committee.

Examples of Advocacy

Colorado Zontians Success: Resolution Passed to Ratify CEDAW	Summary of Action pdf
	Advocacy Lessons Learned pdf
	Colorado Resolution pdf
	Legislative Briefing on CEDAW pdf
	Cover Letter to Colorado Legislators pdf
	Public Participation in Legislative Hearing pdf
Zonta Club of Brussel Zavel	LAA Activity - Sisterhood in the Internet Cloud doc
	Scorecard for Activity pdf
District 11: CEDAW Ratification	CEDAW Resolution for District 11 doc
	CEDAW Resolution for Zonta Club of... doc
	Template Letter for Club to Senators doc
	Template Letter for Club Member to Senators doc
	Template Letter for Club Member to Senate Foreign Relations Committee doc
	Template Letter for Club Member to Any Senator doc
	US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Contact List doc

LAA Resources

LAA Powerpoint | [ppt](#)

Slides 1-13: Advocacy definition (current)

Slides 14-16: Advocacy protocol

Slide 17: Linking advocacy with awards/programs

Slides 18-20: Lobbying explanation

Slides 21-25: For US Clubs - tax implications

Slide 26: Caution re: letter writing

Slides 27-30: Legislative Awareness

Slides 31-34: Advocacy Checklist

Slides 35-36: Zonta Resources

Slides 37-39: Other Resources

Slide 40: Contacts

These notes on LAA are provided for use by members, clubs and districts at Zonta meetings only (club, area, district); they are not for 'external' use or dissemination.

Resolutions

- HIV/AIDS (adopted 2004) | [pdf](#)
- Trafficking (adopted 2002) | [pdf](#)
- Optional Protocol (adopted 2000) | [pdf](#)
- Violence Against Women (adopted 1998) | [pdf](#)
- Female Genital Mutilation (adopted 1994) | [pdf](#)

ZI and Disaster Relief (from *The Zontian* February 2010) | [pdf](#) June 2010

2010 CSW (Commission on the Status of Women) - New York

[Hillary Clinton Speech to CSW - 12 March 2010](#)

[OSAGI Presentation to CSW - 3 March 2010](#)

(Download Real Player to view these videos)

[Photos of Zonta at CSW](#)

Media Items

1. Gendercide - What happened to 100 million baby girls? (The Economist, 6 March 2010) | [pdf](#) June 2010
2. Widows - You Become A Zero (Women's Weekly, January 2008) | [pdf](#) June 2010

Club / District Activities

1. Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Quiz | [Quiz](#) | [Answers](#) June 2010
2. Zonta Convention - LAA Presentation | [ppt](#) August 2010
(This presentation refers to the two media items listed above.)

Please note: Materials are for use by Zonta members, clubs, areas and districts only and should not be distributed to other groups, individuals or organizations. The LAA Committee requests that materials not be altered as the content has been approved.

related information

[> CEDAW 2010-2012](#)

[> International Advocacy](#)

[> Legislative Awareness and Advocacy \(LAA\) Committee](#)

[> Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Archives](#)

[> Zonta & Say NO UNiTE Campaign](#)

Additional information for LAA

On the following pages you will find information on issues and/or actions that have been followed in various states and nationally.

This year has seen the focus of our attention drawn to discussions of budget as we see the national government, states and municipalities struggling to balance their budgets. The current discussion surrounding the need to constrain revenue and taxes has exacerbated the need for vigilance surrounding women's programs.

Special attention needs to be placed on programs related to domestic violence, trafficking, and poverty alleviation. Educational opportunities are also subject to cutbacks, which could mean fewer opportunities for girls.

Because this is so prevalent, we need to watch for cutbacks in areas of women's health specifically. Threats to everything from local women's clinics to UNFPA threaten to rollback improvements to women's health care and services. We need to show the economic and long-term advantages of investing in women's health, which also improves the health of their children.

Please try to study the funding issues in your local and state, and work with your lead to be an effective voice. Please try to learn what your US Representative(s) and Senators will support for women this year.

The UN budget is critical to our wellbeing, and this year especially the US has the chance to support the wellbeing of women worldwide. If we are to support the ZI mission, we **MUST** provide the advocacy needed for UN Women – the new UN entity for women's issues globally. Headed by former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet this entity promises to work to improve the status of women worldwide. Without substantial US funding, the new entity will be held back in its work. Already developing countries are stepping up to the plate with increased financial commitments. What will it be like if the US does not follow suit?

Now, more than ever, we need your commitment to BE A VOICE FOR ZONTA.

How the U.S. Funds the UN

(source: *The Better World Campaign*)

Each year, Congress must pass legislation to fund the activities and obligations of the U.S. government. In Fiscal Year 2011, U.S. funding to the UN included \$1.887 billion for peacekeeping operations, \$516 million for the regular budget, and \$354 million for agencies that the U.S. contributes to but is not an assessed contribution, such as UN Women, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the World Health Organization (WHO). The U.S. is the largest contributor to the UN, UN peacekeeping, and UN agencies, paying almost a quarter of the UN regular and peacekeeping budgets.

The President's Budget Request

More than a year before the beginning of the U.S. fiscal year on October 1, federal agencies and the Office of Management and Budget develop a spending plan that reflects both the broad priorities of the President and details his recommendations for agencies' budgets. By the February before the start of the fiscal year, the President submits that budget to Congress.

The State Department's budget includes the U.S.-assessed contribution to the UN's regular budget -- along with 43 other UN-system, regional, and non-UN organizations -- in its Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account. U.S. assessed contributions to the UN's peacekeeping operations are in the State Department's Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account.

The Budget Resolution

When Congress receives the President's budget, the House and Senate Budget Committees use it to develop their own broad outline to guide Congress' spending decisions. The committees package their recommendations into a Concurrent Budget Resolution. Congressional budget rules require that both houses pass the Concurrent Budget Resolution by mid April, but they often consider it much later, and sometimes not at all.

The Concurrent Budget Resolution lays out the budget in broad categories of spending. It establishes a funding level for Function 150, International Affairs, and assumes UN funding will come from that pot, but does not specify a dollar amount for the UN.

Appropriations

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees write the legislation that specifies how much money federal agencies may spend. Starting in early spring, the 12 appropriations subcommittees in each house hold hearings and draft bills. The Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs sets the funding level for the State Department and the UN.

Ideally, the House and the Senate take up each appropriations bill, pass it, work out the differences between the two houses in a conference committee, then vote again on the final compromise version -- all before the beginning of the fiscal year on October 1. But Congress frequently resorts to temporary, stop-gap spending measures as the appropriations process drags on past the fiscal year deadline, and individual bills are sometimes packaged into omnibus spending measures to save time.

The Law

When the President signs an appropriations bill passed in both the House and the Senate, that bill becomes law.

Current and Proposed U.S. Funding for the UN

Congress fully funded the regular and peacekeeping budgets for fiscal year 2011 and paid off our debt to the UN but current proposals in the House would put the U.S. back into arrears.

H.R 2829, the United Nations Transparency, Accountability, and Reform Act of 2011

Source: *The Better World Campaign*

At a time when the United States and United Nations are working together to address some of the world's most pressing challenges—from the humanitarian needs of those in the Horn of Africa and Haiti, to political crises and violence in Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Afghanistan—it is more important than ever that America maintain its longstanding commitment to global leadership and engagement. Unfortunately, enactment of H.R. 2829 (Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-FL) would jeopardize that commitment by forfeiting our standing at the UN, thereby undermining America's national security, foreign policy, and economic interests. Reform, transparency and accountability at the UN are critical to its success, but this legislation does not bring us any closer to achieving those laudable goals. H.R.2829 not only undermines progress toward reform at the United Nations, but would also return us to an era of debt and ineffective American leadership. We cannot afford to turn our backs on the world.

Reforming the UN means being at the table and effectively using our influence, not walking away. Driving the U.S. back into debt at the United Nations will undermine our ability to press for greater accountability. The US will not foster change at the UN by walking away from it. Some of the most significant reforms undertaken by the UN in recent years have occurred because we are current on our dues and willing to use our place at the table to press for improvements.

Efforts to strengthen UN oversight, the creation of a new ethics office, the consolidation of four disparate entities into **UN Women**, and the recently-proposed three percent reduction in the UN's budget have all come at a time when the U.S. is constructively engaged with the body and up to date on its financial obligations. Reforms and accountability come from engagement, not estrangement.

The legislation cuts funding to UN entities tasked with implementing the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child**. One of our most cherished values as Americans is the idea that everyone is equal under the law. When nations around the world uphold that fundamental principle, we are better off. But the legislation requires the U.S. to withhold from its dues the amount the UN spends on these important UN conventions. Rather than sanctioning these initiatives, we should support the President's efforts to ask the Senate to move forward with ratification of both treaties in the near future.

The BWC analyses H.R. 2829 as follows:

- ☒ Erodes America's leadership at the United Nations and cripples a vital tool of U.S. national security.
- ☒ Establishes a moratorium on new or expanded peacekeeping missions.
- ☒ Handicaps ongoing peacekeeping operations in places like South Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire and Haiti.
- ☒ Increases costs to U.S. taxpayers for political missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- ☒ Curbs vital efforts to combat terrorism, monitor sanctions, and prevent WMD from getting into the hands of rogue states and terrorists.

- ☒ Slows the critically important process of reconstruction in Haiti.
- ☒ Undermines America’s leadership on matters of international security and humanitarian crises.
- ☒ Jeopardizes free and fair elections in countries like Liberia, DR Congo, Haiti and Cote d’Ivoire.
- ☒ Defunds efforts to combat global pandemics.
- ☒ Removes our voice from the only agency monitoring Iran’s nuclear ambitions.
- ☒ Undercuts U.S. ability to push for new UN reforms and removes funding for ongoing reforms, like internal oversight and ethics.

Further explanation:

☒ *Cutting UN funding undermines U.S. national security* by jeopardizing UN programs that serve critical U.S. interests, and severely erodes U.S. legitimacy and respect abroad. The legislation would cut U.S. assessed contributions to the UN by 50% unless it moves to a system of voluntary funding. This proposed cut would undermine U.S. national security, severely erode U.S. legitimacy abroad and cause massive new U.S. debt to the UN. It would seriously impact UN political missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and potentially result in the U.S. paying significantly more for these initiatives than it currently does. These missions are paid for out of our assessed dues and are effective because they are funded by all UN member countries and therefore carry international legitimacy. A move to voluntary funding would lead countries to cherry pick which UN activities they want to support, potentially leaving certain initiatives—including counter-terrorism and sanctions-monitoring work as well as the UN Iraq and Afghanistan missions—devoid of funding.

☒ *Failing to meet our obligations will diminish our ability to leverage the UN in support of vital U.S. national security objectives.* Just within the past year, the UN Security Council has authorized military action to protect innocent lives in Libya and to impose a fourth round of sanctions on Iran to stop its illicit nuclear program. Why would we retreat from the UN when we have seen effective action on issues that are central to our foreign policy interests? This legislation would cause us to turn our back on our allies at the UN, thereby jeopardizing our ability to advance those crucial foreign policy goals. Crippling UN peacekeeping will compromise global security.

☒ *Working together so the U.S. does not have to go it alone.* With over 120,000 boots on the ground in four continents, UN peacekeeping efforts account for one of the world’s largest military deployments, second only to U.S. military operations. The U.S. plays a central role in authorizing UN peacekeeping operations to support peace and security in 16 hotspots around the globe, including bolstering U.S. efforts in Lebanon, Haiti and South Sudan.

☒ Onerous reforms and certifications will prevent future or expanded peacekeeping missions and handicap current operations. The legislation conditions future US support for any new or expanded UN peacekeeping missions on the achievement of unrealistic goals, such as a yearly audit of each mission with no additional resources to actually conduct them. While some of the legislation’s proposed reforms

are laudable, preventing or ending an operation until a certain oath is sworn or class is taken undermines US national security interests.

If this legislation had been enacted this year, there likely would have been no new missions in South Sudan or Abyei, both of which the U.S. championed. In addition, this bill would handicap existing missions by not allowing them to expand by even one soldier to address a crisis on the ground unless the same set of unreachable goals were met. In reality, the U.S. has worked hand in hand with the UN to ensure that all peacekeepers are held to a high standard of personal conduct.

Establishing preferential treatment is not transparency, and would likely lead to funding being cut off to vital UN organizations such as UNICEF, the World Food Program, and the World Health Organization.

☒ The legislation would suspend funding to any UN entity that did not agree to sign a “transparency certification” with the U.S. Comptroller General for the UN. While UN agencies already provide extensive oversight information to the U.S., our key partners for reform in the UN system would never agree to the U.S. receiving preferential treatment for oversight information.

The legislation adds a layer of bureaucracy and new functions at the Government Accountability Office without authorizing one dime to actually undertake that work.

The legislation cedes the playing field to countries seeking to criticize Israel and undermine human rights.

☒ The legislation would withhold contributions for the UN Human Rights Council. This is an extremely ineffective strategy that would only serve to reverse the important gains the U.S. has made over the past two years at the Council. The U.S. rejoined the Human Rights Council in 2009 with a mandate to improve the Council’s work by refocusing attention on the worst abusers of human rights and eliminating the disproportionate attention paid by some of its members to Israel. Since the U.S. has rejoined, the body has voted to establish a UN human rights investigator for Iran, adopted a groundbreaking resolution to address violence, discrimination, and incitement to religious hatred without reference to “defamation of religions,” established Commissions of Inquiry to investigate gross and systematic violations of human rights in Libya and Syria, and overcome Chinese and Cuban objections to the establishment of a new monitor for implementing freedom of assembly and association.

☒ The bill cuts support to finding long-term solutions for refugees in places like Darfur and Haiti, much of which is funded by our assessed contributions.

☒ The UN’s coordination of humanitarian assistance in all parts of the world, including Japan, Haiti, Pakistan and elsewhere, all of which is funded by our assessed dues, would also be undermined.

Advocacy Project: National Women's History Museum – Report from Washington, D.C.

This information will assist you and your club with providing advocacy for this legislation. Right now you are asked you to contact your Senators to urge them to champion ***The National Women's History Museum Act*** (see bill #s below), giving women's history a permanent site in Washington, D.C. This advocacy project requires an affirmative vote from your club to act on the club's behalf. However, individuals can show support now ~ write to your Senator today.

September 8, the National Women's History Museum Act passed the **House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure**. The NWHM bill was attached to other legislation supported by Committee Chairman John Mica (R-FL) and re-introduced as **H.R. 2844, the National Women's History Museum and Federal Facilities Consolidation and Efficiency Act of 2011**. Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) is a cosponsor of the bill, which was originally reintroduced on March 30 as HR 1269.

The legislative language in the new bill revises and further clarifies the boundaries of the site that NWHM will be allowed to purchase at 12th Street and Independence Avenue, SW., adjacent to the National Mall, at market value. This change eliminates any questions as to Congressional intent and will be helpful in site negotiations with the General Services Administration (GSA), the nation's landlord.

April 14, The National Women's History Museum Act, S 680 passed out of the **Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW)** on a voice vote. Senator Susan Collins had also reintroduced the legislation on March 30 (S. 680.) 19 Senators are cosponsoring it.

Legislative History:

During the last session of Congress, the bipartisan bill H.R. 1700 was introduced by Representative Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY). The bill allowed NWHM to purchase - at fair market value - land next to the National Mall so that they could build in Washington, D.C. the first major repository of women's accomplishments and contributions. It passed the House on October 14, 2009. The Senate companion bill was introduced by Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) on October 29, 2009. The Senate bill passed out of the Senate Committee on April 21, 2010. As the bill headed to the Senate floor for approval, two senators -- Jim DeMint and Tom Coburn -- placed holds on the bill. Senate Majority leader Harry Reid agreed to attach the Museum bill to two larger pieces of legislation but neither came to the Senate floor. Senator Reid ran out of time in trying to get the Museum bill passed. Thirteen Senate cosponsors urged Sen. DeMint to lift his hold on S. 2129. The result is that the bill needed to be reintroduced in 2011.

The sale of this land involves federal property which must be approved by Congress.

About the National Women's History Museum

- The NWHM, incorporated in 1996 as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational institution, features Online Exhibits such as Rights for Women, Women With a Deadline: Female Printers, Publishers and Journalists and Women Olympians. The Museum funds and produces temporary exhibitions including the traveling Rights for Women, Clandestine Women: The Untold Stories of Women in Espionage and Partners in Winning the War—American Women in World War II.
- Joan Bradley Wages, President & CEO of NWHM, is a founding board member and helped lead the effort to move the Suffrage Statue depicting founders of the U.S. suffrage movement from the U.S. Capitol Crypt upstairs into the Rotunda where it now stands.
- NWHM is made up of a diverse group of supporters including its charter membership of more than 40,000 individuals, as well as a number of corporations, foundations and organizations. In

addition, the NWHM National Coalition represents a growing number of national women's professional and service organizations committed to supporting its mission.

THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM ACT: FACT SHEET

The legislation introduced allows land adjacent to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to be purchased at fair-market value as a new home for a comprehensive museum dedicated to preserving and celebrating women's lives in society.

- The NWHM currently has a track record of providing exhibits and archiving information about women's history. For example, it currently provides an award-winning, web-based Museum (www.nwhm.org) as well as a permanent "preview" exhibit in its temporary offices. In addition, NWHM sponsors Online Exhibits, permanent and traveling exhibitions and classroom curricula that celebrate female heroes and preserves the stories of women whose lives have too often been lost to history.
- On March 30, 2011, HR 1269, the National Women's History Museum Act, was introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) with 22 cosponsors: Representatives Sandy Adams (R-FL), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Karen Bass (D-CA), Judy Biggert (R-IL), Marsha Blackburn (R-TN), Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-GU), Susan A. Davis (D-CA), Barney Frank (D-MA), Raul M. Grijalva (D-AZ), Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA), Jesse L. Jackson Jr. (D-IL), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Cynthia M. Lummis (R-WY), Doris O. Matsui (D-CA), Gwen Moore (D-WI), James P. Moran (D-VA), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Janice D. Schakowsky (D-IL), Jean Schmidt (R-OH), Jackie Speier (D-CA), and Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA).
- The Senate companion, S 680, was introduced by Senator Susan Collins also on March 30, 2011 with 19 cosponsors: Senators Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI), Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Mark Begich (D-AK), Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kay Hagan (D-NC), Kay Bailey Hutchinson (R-TX), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Joe Lieberman (I-CT), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Patty Murray (D-WA), Mark Pryor (D-AR), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Olympia Snowe (R-ME), and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI).
- The 12th and Independence location will allow for the building size to be comparable to other major national museums. This space will provide ample room for exhibits and educational activities.
- NWHM plans to build one of the first green museums in the nation's capital. This Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified Museum will meet the U.S. Green Building Council's requirements, including sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.
- Once the legislation is enacted, the Museum will raise private funds to purchase the vacant lot at fair market value within three years.

Summary of past legislation:

- The President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History called for the creation of a women's history museum, recognizing NWHM, in Washington, D.C. in 1999. The Senate twice passed a bill in 2004 and 2007 on unanimous consent that would have allowed the NWHM to lease space in the Old Post Office Building. The bill did not come up before the House. In October 2009, the House passed HR 1700 to allow the

purchase of a site at 12th Street and Independence Avenue S.W. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works passed HR 1700 and S 2129. Time ran out to get the bill passed on the Senate floor.

Advocacy Project: CEDAW

Background information from: The National Committee on UN CEDAW (Founded by Billie Heller in 1980, the National Committee on UN CEDAW is a national, grassroots organization solely dedicated to achieving United States CEDAW ratification.)

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948; it serves as the genesis for all future human rights treaties

What is CEDAW?

CEDAW stands for the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*. It is regarded as the most important international mechanism for women's equality, addressing physical, sexual, economic, and political abuses against women and promoting women's equality of rights and well-being. CEDAW holds that basic human rights for women should be universal across cultures and religions.

- CEDAW is about women being able to exercise the same human rights as men.
- CEDAW is a Bill of Rights that can save women's lives.
- CEDAW is a blueprint for those seeking justice.
- CEDAW empowers women in other nations by enabling them to bring national attention and point to an international standard of human rights for the treatment of women.
- The treaty is an essential tool for creating a dialogue and awareness of women's basic rights.

About CEDAW

Ratified by 186 countries – more than 95% of the UN member states. It has the second highest number of ratifications for a human rights treaty. Only the Convention on the Rights of the Child enjoys more ratification.

How Does CEDAW Work?

A CEDAW Committee, comprised of 23 international experts, monitor the implementation of the treaty.

Similar to other treaties, states parties submit a report the first year after ratification and then every four years. The reports are an important vehicle for identifying areas of improvement and increasing awareness

Optional Protocols

In 1999, two Optional Protocols were adopted to strengthen the treaty and assist the CEDAW Committee in its work:

- Established inquiry procedure and created a mechanism for individual communication

U.S. Ratification Efforts of CEDAW

December 18, 1979: United Nations unanimously approves CEDAW.

July 17, 1980: President Jimmy Carter signs the treaty.

1990: **The Senate Foreign Relations Committee holds a hearing on the Treaty.** (*Only the Senate must approve; not the House of Representatives. To pass it must be approved by 2/3 of Senators present and voting, ie 67 if full membership is voting.*)

September 1994: The Senate Foreign Relations Committee votes 13 to 5 with one abstention to recommend treaty passage by the full Senate. Several senators put a "hold" on it for the duration of the 103rd Congress.

1999: Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and nine other senators call for a new hearing and treaty ratification, but are rebuffed by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and removed from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Room by the Capitol Police.

June 13, 2002: Sen Joseph Biden (D-DE), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, holds CEDAW hearing

July 30, 2002: The treaty was voted favorably out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a 12 to 7 margin. The Senate adjourns without time for voting on ratification. The treaty reverts back to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee where it remains today.

November 18, 2010: The Senate Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Human Rights & the Law, under Sen Durbin of IL, holds a hearing. Over 80 organizations submitted testimony; largest turnout ever to a hearing of this subcommittee. **ZONTA in IL reportedly very influential in making this hearing happen!!**

What's Happening Next re: CEDAW?

- Senator Boxer will hold hearings on CEDAW for women in the Middle East in Sept/Oct in order to build evidence of how successful/important CEDAW's been in other countries.
- The Coalition has hired a fulltime person, June Zeitland, who is working out of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, to coordinate efforts towards ratification this year.
- The strategy now is to keep CEDAW on the radar screen of the Senate and keep right-wing opposition at bay (This may involve supporting campaigns of Senators who are perceived as friends of women's rights, ie

Kay Bailey Hutchinson, GA; the 2 women Republican Senators from ME; Richard Lugar, IN, etc.

- Support is being sought from organizations considered more mainstream than some current supporting organizations, ie the YWCA, and **Zonta**.
- We will be participating in meetings in Washington DC to strategize how best to make our support known.

What you can do this year:

Support your Club's LAA and write letters, attend meetings, lobby your Senators when asked.

Advocacy Project: ERA – Report from VA

The ERA was passed out of Congress in 1972 and has been ratified by 35 of the necessary 38 states. When three more states vote yes, it is possible that the ERA could become the 28th Amendment. The ERA could also be ratified by restarting the traditional process of passage by a two-thirds majority in the Senate and the House of Representatives, followed by ratification by legislatures in three-quarters (38) of the 50 states.

Why is an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution necessary?

The Equal Rights Amendment would provide a fundamental legal remedy against sex discrimination for both women and men. It would guarantee that the rights affirmed by the U.S. Constitution are held equally by all citizens without regard to sex.

The ERA would clarify the legal status of sex discrimination for the courts, where decisions still deal inconsistently with such claims.

What is the political history of the ERA?

The Equal Rights Amendment was written in 1923 by Alice Paul, a leader of the woman suffrage movement and a lawyer. It was introduced in Congress in the same year and subsequently reintroduced in every Congressional session for half a century.

On March 22, 1972, the ERA finally passed the Senate and the House of Representatives by the required two-thirds majority and was sent to the states for ratification. An original seven-year deadline was later extended by Congress to June 30, 1982. When this deadline expired, only 35 of the necessary 38 states (the constitutionally required three-fourths) had ratified the ERA. It is therefore not yet included in the U.S. Constitution.

The Equal Rights Amendment has been reintroduced in every session of Congress since 1982. In the 111th Congress (2009-2010), ERA ratification bills were introduced as *S.J.Res. 41* (lead sponsor, Senator Robert Menendez, D-NJ) and *H.J.Res. 61* (lead sponsors, Representative Carolyn Maloney, D-NY, and Representative Judy Biggert, R-IL). The 15 states whose legislatures have not ratified the Equal Rights Amendment are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

Virginia is the only state that is in District 3.

Why are these 15 states still being asked to ratify the ERA under a “three-state strategy,” even though the 1982 deadline has passed?

The three-state strategy was developed following ratification of the Constitution’s 27th Amendment in 1992, more than 203 years after its passage by Congress in 1789. Acceptance of that ratification period as sufficiently contemporaneous has led some ERA supporters to argue that Congress has the power to maintain the legal viability of the ERA’s existing 35 state ratifications. The time limit on ERA ratification is open to change, as Congress demonstrated in extending the original deadline, and precedent with the 14th and 15th Amendments shows that rescissions (legislative votes retracting ratifications) are not valid. Therefore, Congress may be able to accept state ratifications that occur after 1982 and keep the existing 35 ratifications alive.

LATEST NEWS:

**The ERA in Congress
*112th Session (2011-2012)***

On June 22, 2011, ERA ratification bills were introduced in the Senate (*S.J.Res. 21*) by lead sponsor Senator Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and in the House of Representatives (*H.J. Res. 69*) by lead sponsor Representative Carolyn Maloney (D-NY).

On Mar. 8, 2011, Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) introduced *H.J.Res 47*, which would remove the ERA’s ratification deadline and make it part of the Constitution when three more states ratify.

The ERA in Virginia

On Feb. 7, 2011, the Virginia Senate passed a resolution (SJ357) ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment. However, the House of Delegates companion bill (HJ640, chief sponsor Del. Mark Sickles) was tabled in Subcommittee #1 (Constitutional) of the Privileges and Elections Committee twice, on Jan. 31 and Feb. 14. No further action was taken in that legislative session.

What Can We Do in Virginia?

Join the Coalition. Elect Congressmen and Senators who have supported women’s issues in the past. Invite Diana Egozcue, VA NOW President and ardent supporter of the ERA, to speak at our meetings for more up-to-the-minute suggestions on letters and calls to our Representatives and Senators.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: PA Legislative Update

Senate Resolution No.12 Recognizing January 11, 2011, as “National Human Trafficking Awareness Day” in Pennsylvania.

Whereas, This Commonwealth has a tradition of advancing fundamental human rights; and

Whereas, It is imperative to eliminate human trafficking, including early or forced marriage, commercial sexual exploitation, forced labor, labor obtained through debt bondage, involuntary servitude, slavery and slavery by descent; and

Whereas, To combat human trafficking in this Commonwealth and globally, the people of Pennsylvania and State and local governments must be aware of the realities of human trafficking and must be dedicated to stopping this contemporary manifestation of slavery; and

The resolution continues ...efforts to actively oppose all who support trafficking through education, victim support, awareness for those who come in contact with victims. Laws are on the books but more awareness to the problem but be raised. To read the complete resolution (a little over 2 pages) visit <http://www.legis.state.pa.us> and enter SR 12.

Senate Bill 338 currently in the Labor and Industry Committee, but has a good chance of passing in the Senate this session.

An Act providing for the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline Act; and imposing duties on prothonotaries.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. Short title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline Act.

Section 2. Required posting.

Sign. An establishment shall post a sign indicating certain information regarding the National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline....size and near entrance. The sign shall state the following:

National Human Trafficking Resource Center Hotline at 1-888-373-7888

If you or someone you know is being forced to engage in any activity and cannot leave – whether it is commercial sex, housework, farm work or any other activity- call the

National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 to access help and services. Victims of human trafficking are protected under United States and Pennsylvania law. The hotline is: Anonymous and confidential, available 24/7, Toll free, Operated by a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization, Accessible in 170 languages, Able to provide help, referral to services, training and general information.

The bill continues with posting, languages, font, notice, website civil penalty, hearing, lien....and the types of businesses required to post. To read the complete bill (4pages), please go to the previously referenced web site and put in SB388. There is a **House Bill HB235** that is very similar to the Senate, but goes into more detail on more businesses and those that require licenses and fines that could occur. The bill is seven pages in length. This bill has a good chance of passing in this session. So, we could have a law in PA.

Senate Bill 885 in the Judiciary Committee does not have as good a chance to pass this session.

An Act Amending Titles 18(Crimes and Offenses) and 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for the definition of “commercial sex”; further providing for the trafficking of persons and for prostitution and related offences; and providing for motion to vacate conviction for prostitution.

Because this is changing existing law, there may be problems passing. The reason behind the needed changes is so people may obtain employment. To see the entire bill, please visit web site previously mentioned web site and put in SB885 (3 and ½ pages)

What we can do in PA? We should all try to find out about pending legislation in our states on the issues that Zonta cares about and voice our support of such legislation.

Nancy Baulis, District 3 LAA Lead for PA, Zonta Club of Philadelphia 610-543-2117
nbaulis@verizon.net

**REPORT OF THE ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT 3 LAA COMMITTEE LEAD
FOR AREA 3 (MARYLAND)**

There are two good resources for legislation affecting women in the State of Maryland:

1. Maryland Legislative Agenda for Women
(www.mdlegagenda4women.org)

This is “a statewide coalition of women's groups and individuals formed to provide a non-partisan, independent, voice for Maryland women and families. The group advocates for progressive legislation and policy that promotes and protects the well being of Maryland women and their families and provides them opportunities to develop their full potential.”

2. Women Legislators of the Maryland General Assembly, Inc.
(Www.womenlegislatorsmd.org)

Mission is “to improve public policy that affects women’s lives and increase the number of women elected and appointed to public office in Maryland.”

Both of these groups offer support or opposition to legislation affecting women that is proposed during the Maryland General Assembly Session.

The following is the status of Maryland law in the four areas of concentration by the District 3 LAA:

- A. **Family planning:** The Family Planning Works Act passed by the 2011 Maryland General Assembly and approved by the Governor, to be effective on January 1, 2012, expands the eligibility requirements for family planning services under the Maryland Medical Assistance Program to those women whose family income is at or below 200% of the poverty level. (Previously, the eligibility was 116% of the federal poverty level.)

1. Also affecting women’s health, Maryland’s Insurance Code requires coverage for the cost of inpatient hospitalization services for a minimum of 48 hours following a mastectomy.

- B. **Equal pay:** Maryland has had its “equal rights amendment” since 1972. Article 46 of the Declaration of Rights under Maryland’s Constitution states that “equality of rights under the law shall not be abridged or denied because of sex.”

1. As of July 2, 2011, Maryland law protects against discrimination by wages so that employees of both sexes must be paid at the same rate if they “work in the same establishment and perform work of comparable character or work on the same operation, in the same business, or of the same type.” Md. Labor and Employment Code Ann. Section 3-304.

- C. **Violence against women:** Maryland law very broadly protects victims of domestic violence.
1. Protective orders are issued against the current or former spouse, cohabitant, or any person related to the victim by blood, marriage or adoption. Protection is granted for up to one year and, under certain circumstances, for up to two years. As of January 1, 2010, the abuser is required to surrender all firearms to law enforcement authorities.
 2. Peace orders are issued against persons who do not meet the relationship requirements for protective orders. Protection is granted for up to six months (which may be extended for an additional six months).
- D. **Human trafficking:** In addition Maryland law penalizing the trafficker, the 2010 and 2011 General Assemblies passed the following additional measures designed to protect or assist the victims:
1. All lodging establishments (read “sleazy motels”) are required to post a specifically designed sign notifying all persons how to contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center if they are, or they know of someone who is, being forced to have sex without consent, have had an ID or documents taken away, are being threatened by or are in debt to an employer, and who want to leave a job but cannot “freely” do so. Failure to do so may result in a civil penalty of up to \$1,000.
 2. The Maryland Department of Education, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, provide awareness and training for Directors of Student Services on human trafficking, including strategies for the prevention of trafficking of children.
 3. The 2011 General Assembly passed the “Human Trafficking Victim Protection Act” which authorizes a person convicted of prostitution to have the conviction vacated if that person was acting under duress caused by the act of an act of another committed in violation of the Maryland law against human trafficking (Md. Criminal Law Code Ann. #11-303).

To identify your elected representatives (U. S. Senators, U. S. Representative, MD Senator and MD Representative), see: <http://mdelect.net/> where you simply enter your home address. The information includes links to each elected official’s website.

If you have questions or want more information, please contact me at barbara.taylor@verizon.net.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Taylor
Area 3/Maryland LAA Lead

Legislative Update from New York

Listed below you will find numerous bills that have been introduced during the 2011 legislative session. Each of these bills has been sponsored by Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel and seeks to improve the health and well being women in New York State.

Health:

Several bills have been introduced to improve the health and reproductive rights of women.

- Assembly bill **A7194** requires insurance policies with hospital, surgical or medical coverage to provide coverage for hysterectomies including inpatient hospital coverage for a minimum of 72 hours after surgery.
Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.
Status: Referred to Assembly Insurance Committee,
Same as Senate Bill S3833: referred to Senate Insurance Committee
- Assembly bill **A808** seeks to amend the public health law in relation to establishing age appropriate sex education programs which will aim at preventing unwanted pregnancies and occurrences of sexually transmitted diseases among youth.
Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.
Status: Referred to Assembly Health committee, No Senate bill
- Assembly bill **A1431A** seeks to amend the insurance law, to require health insurance policies to provide additional coverage for additional tests (ultrasound, MRI) if a mammogram demonstrates dense breast tissue. It also requires specific written notification be provided to patients regarding their breast density and the availability of the additional tests.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Referred to Assembly Insurance Committee, Passed Senate (S1883A)

- Assembly bill **A3862**, seeks to amend the public health law in relation to breast cancer research. The bill authorizes funding for mapping incidences of breast cancer from the Breast Cancer Research and Education Fund.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Passed Assembly, Referred to Senate Rules Committee

- Assembly bill **A337** updates the 1993 law that provides insurance coverage for cervical cancer screenings in order to reflect current clinical guidelines. With this legislation more women will be covered for cervical cancer screenings.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Referred to Insurance Committee in the Assembly, No Senate bill

- Assembly bill **A669** seeks to enables survivors of sexual assault who have undergone a forensic rape exam to receive the full course of HIV post-exposure prophylaxis treatment regardless of the ability to pay.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Passed Senate (S3200), Referred to Assembly Ways and Means Committee

Violence Against Women:

Several bills have been introduced that seek to protect women from violent acts.

- Assembly bill **A698D** seeks to disqualify persons convicted of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from purchasing a firearm.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill

Status: Signed into Law

- Assembly bill **A1535** seeks to protect victims of actual or threatened abuse, sexual assault or stalking through a substitute mailing address to be designed by the Secretary of State. The act would enable state and local agencies to respond to requests for public records without disclosing the location of a victim and would enable interagency cooperation with the office of the Secretary of State in providing address confidentiality.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill

Status: Referred to Assembly Government Operations Committee, No Senate bill

- Assembly bill **A3428** seeks to ensure the confidentiality of victims of domestic violence. The screening process for public housing apartments requires that an applicant produce three pieces of identification stating that a person convicted of a crime no longer lives with the applicant. This puts many domestic violence victims at risk because they often have to come in contact with their former abusers in order to produce this identification. This bill will ensure that any agency or authority cannot compel a domestic violence victim to contact their abuser.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Enacting Clause Stricken, No Senate bill

Women's Rights:

Assembly bill **A6448** was introduced to promote the education and awareness of the struggle for women's rights throughout history by creating a "Women's Rights History Trail."

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Passed Assembly, Referred to Senate: currently in Senate Civil Service and Pensions committee

Equal Pay:

Despite the fact that women now make up approximately half of the workforce, disparities in income still exist between the sexes. Several bills have been introduced that seek to bridge these gaps.

- Assembly bill **A1780** seeks to amend the civil service law and eliminate any wage inequality that exists in job titles which have been segregated by sex, race, or national origin.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Passed Assembly, Defeated in Senate Civil Service Committee

- Assembly bill **A1233** seeks to establish an Equal Rights Amendment to the NYS Constitution to insure that no person in the State of NY will be denied equal protection of the laws based on their sex. This bill seeks to add the category “sex” to the protected categories of Section 11 of article 1 to the NYS Constitution.

Assemblywoman Schimel is a sponsor of this bill.

Status: Enacting Clause Stricken in Assembly, Referred to Judiciary Committee in Senate.

Human Trafficking:

The purpose of Assembly bill **A1061** is to promote the human trafficking referral hotline. The hotline assists individuals in freeing themselves from any act of sex trafficking. The bill will require all adult entertainment establishments and any person, corporation or other business establishment with a license to sell alcoholic beverages for consumption on the premises to advertise the hotline.

Status: Referred to Assembly Economic Development Committee,

No Senate Bill