

ZONTA DISTRICT 4
FINAL REPORT
DISTRICT ADVOCACY COMMITTEE
ZONTA USA CAUCUS

May 2020

The Zonta USA Caucus has been very busy over the biennium. The Caucus was created in Washington, DC during the North American Interdistrict Meeting, in meeting with a number of us and Sonia, our past president, as a way for US Zontians to work on the issues specific to our country and culture. Most of our meetings have been virtual, unless we were able to meet at Convention or NAIM

Issues addressed:

Cities for CEDAW

Trafficking

VAW

Child Marriage

ERA

Through the caucus, US clubs have been able to support each other as we work on specific issues. For instance, since legislation re child marriage passed in PA, we are supporting the billboard campaign with Unicef in another state.

ERA Coalition

Members attended the Virtual Campus for ERA Day – the presenters were good; high school students presented their concerns and plans

Clubs are encouraged to work with the ERA Coalition, and find ways to connect our clubs with Z and Global Z clubs with student activities of the coalition

Members are encouraged to go to the EQUAL MEANS EQUAL website to sign their petition

Some clubs have been having controversy with members and the Eagle Forum, an antiERA group (among other things) because they say it is an abortion bill. Actually there is no connection with reproductive rights in this bill. Simply stated: The ERA would provide that equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States of America or by any state on account of sex.

Some discussion of creating a discussion group about the movie MRS AMERICA, which is about Phyllis Shaffley.

2.

NATIONAL COALITION TO END CHILD MARRIAGE

PA, working through Unchained At Last, just signed a bill that sets age of marriage at 18 with no loopholes. Delaware and New Jersey had previously passed such a bill, and Minnesota followed quickly behind PA. Zontians in PA are asked to write to Gov. Wolf and legislators to thank them for passing/signing this bill.

NY raised the age to 17, but are having some issues, so we are not focusing on NY at the moment.

More information can be found at <https://stopchildmarriage.org>

The Caucus is also working on this with UNICEF and has developed a billboard project, where billboards will be placed in states who are working on this legislation. It is an amazing project, with tools on the ZI website and a power point included with this report. The goal is at least 1 digital billboard in a city through LAMAR sign company.

States being focused on now: New Hampshire, Maryland, Massachusetts, South Carolina

It was also suggested that we work with Unicef , their Unicef Uniters and ZI to education Unicef about the work we are doing in this field.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAW)

Violence against women has increased during Covid (check the website NO MORE). Kings County, Washington, is providing the ability to receive PFA's through the courts on line or by phone. You might contact your local agencies and appropriate judicial entities to find out how this is being handled through the pandemic.

Bobbee has suggested that since we all have experts in our communities, that we invite them to be part of our committees to gather information that can be handed on to the UN. Their names could be obtained through club presidents or advocacy chairs

TRAFFICKING

Shared Hope International provides report cards on how states are working on trafficking.(website:Protected Innocence Challenge)

NY has a C up from its D last year – needs to work on creating criminal provisions against those who traffic or accept trafficked people; create protective provision for victims

PA has a B; it is a crime to traffic a child for commercial sex acts – no proof is needed of force, fraud, coercion when the person is a child

LEGISLATION

ERA coalition Letter in the senate S6

Internal VAW act Senate S3037, House HR5267

3.

VAWA

FGM bill HR6100, Stop FGM Act of 2020

CITIES FOR CEDAW

Westchester (NY) has just passed a resolution in support of CEDAW

OF INTEREST

May 27, 2020 at 6 PM

ERA Coalition Virtual Town Hall

Focused on Violence Against Women and the ERA

On May 8, there was a townhall on Title IX Rule Changes

This is a new caucus and a very important one. Other cities in various countries are looking to form their own caucuses based on the success of this one. I recommend that we continue to support the caucus, and if Canada is interested work on how a Canadian caucus could be created.

Thank you Bonnie for appointing me to this Caucus.

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