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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
from the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley  
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## Climate Change – A Human Rights Issue

Western MA: Climate change is a major global crisis. It has a negative impact on people and the environment around the world. All of us and next generations will be affected; however, not all of us will be affected in the same way.

**On Monday, March 14th at 6pm, the Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley will host an information session on Climate Change and its impact locally and globally.** Our guest speaker is **Ollie Perrault** - a fifteen-year-old



climate activist and youth climate leader. She lives in Easthampton and has been working with other local climate action organizations to spark social change since she was eleven. She is a founding member of a new local youth led climate action group, [Youth Climate Action Now](#), that works to empower other young people to lead the next steps in the fight against the climate crisis.

**The public is welcome to join us on this virtual meeting and can get a Zoom invitation by contacting [info@zontaqv.org](mailto:info@zontaqv.org).**

While Zonta International is not an environmental or disaster response organization, climate change disproportionately affects women and girls,\* and action is needed from a gender equality perspective.

Zonta International, as an organization pledged to empower women and girls at the global and local levels and promote justice

and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, therefore, calls for action in favor of a fair and human rights-based approach to solve the crisis of climate change in the post-pandemic world and achieve greener, cleaner and equal societies.

As a non-governmental organization with general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, we will participate in the sixty-sixth session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) (3/14-25/22) which has as a priority theme: Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.



The Zonta Club of Quaboag Valley ([www.zontaqv.org](http://www.zontaqv.org)), based in Western MA, is part of Zonta International - a global community that has empowered women and girls through service and advocacy for 102 years. We invite interested individuals to learn more about this organization and its mission by contacting [info@zontaqv.org](mailto:info@zontaqv.org) or visiting [www.zonta.org](http://www.zonta.org) or [www.zontadistrict1.org](http://www.zontadistrict1.org).

**\* What does climate change have to do with gender equality?**

Women and girls are more heavily impacted by climate change than men.

- Women, as caregivers, and food providers, are more vulnerable when flooding and drought occur;
- Women face systematic violence that escalates during periods of instability and can precipitate early marriage or forced prostitution as a way to survive;
- During extreme weather events, women are at greater risk of being injured, killed, displaced and unemployed.
- Globally women have less socioeconomic power than men, so it is harder for them to recover from disasters; and
- The UN highlights that gender-sensitive responses to climate change are needed – but average female representation on negotiating bodies is well below 30%.

**Much of this disadvantage can be rectified through Zonta's existing advocacy, health, education, and violence eradication programs. However, we need to ramp up our activities to ensure that girls are educated, child marriage is ended, gender equality gaps are closed, and women are supported to take on leadership positions in the workplace, community and political spheres.**

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