

La. delegate, 90, reflects on advances for women

Oldest delegate gets plenty of attention

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USA TODAY

PHILADELPHIA — Felicia Kahn remembers attending her first Democratic National Convention 40 years ago, when it was a big deal that Jimmy Carter met with a group of women to talk about their concerns.

“No presidential candidate

had ever done so,” Kahn, a 90-year-old from New Orleans, recalled while attending this year’s convention.

Kahn said the role of women at party conventions has changed over the decades she’s been involved in politics.

“I’ve seen a lot. It’s so exciting,” said Kahn. “What I’ve done over the years is to see the women’s place in the Democratic Party grow and

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Felicia Kahn, a 90-year-old Democratic delegate from New Orleans, talks with Louisiana state Sen. Wesley Bishop (right) and Kahn’s grandson, Zachary Kahn of Arlington, Virginia, Monday.

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Delegate

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grow and grow. To be there when women were hardly recognized and then to get to (this) place... it's sort of like my dreams have been fulfilled."

Kahn is one of the many Clinton convention delegates from Louisiana who are excited to see Clinton make history as the first woman nominat-

ed for president by a major political party.

On opening day Monday, Kahn sported her Clinton buttons and prepared for her 10th convention.

"I'm very upbeat about everything," she said. "I'm just hoping that it goes well."

Kahn has been getting plenty of attention as one of the convention's oldest delegates. She has been featured in local papers and interviewed by national media.

State Sen. Wesley Bishop, who represents Kahn's district, said he has known her for more than 20 years.

"To have that kind of energy and activism at 90 years old is exciting," he said.

Kahn, who unsuccessfully ran twice for the

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state legislature in the 1970s, has been involved in local party politics for years and has worked on campaigns for scores of Democrats, including Gov. John Bel Edwards.

"I'm really proud of his win and proud of the kind of person he is," she said. "He really is very well respected, but having a very difficult time (with) a Republican legislature."

Still, she said, she's disappointed there aren't more women in the state legislature. Kahn works with local Democrats to help get more women involved in politics and to lobby on issues affecting women.

"We haven't been that successful yet, but we hope to be," she said.

Kahn said she hopes this year's Democratic convention showcases

some of the party's notable women. Several women were featured speakers Monday, including Rep. Marcia Fudge, of Ohio.

"My hope for Democrats is that we show that we're together ... and that we have to remain upbeat and we think that life can be improved and that the country can be better with high-quality people who are interested in doing something about the environment and the economy and the lives of people," she said. "I think Obama's been a fine president. My hope is that Hillary can be as good."

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