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OPINION

## A DNC delegate who's backing a winner



Vice President Kamala Harris campaigns for President as the presumptive Democratic candidate during an event at West Allis Central High School, Tuesday, July 23, 2024, in West Allis, Wis. (AP Photo/Kayla Wolf)

By **JERRY GOLDFEDER**

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Politics is pretty exciting these days. I'm a delegate to the [Democratic National Convention](#) and a campaign lawyer. The calls and texts have been coming in like wildfire.

Are you supporting Kamala? (Yes!) Are our [contributions to Biden/Harris transferable to her?](#) (Also yes; she is a principal of the original committee and can use these funds.)

Can the Republicans sue to prevent this last-minute switch that "disrespects" the 14 million primary voters who supported Joe Biden? (They must be kidding. They have no standing to complain about the Democratic Party's rules or procedures. But, more importantly, the rules are clear: delegates can vote for whom they choose "in good conscience," and the majority wins.)

So what's all the twitching about? Maybe because it is so late in the game that [President Biden decided to bow out](#). It may be later in the political season than when Lyndon Johnson renounced his reelection candidacy in

1968 (March 31) or Harry Truman in 1952 (March 29), but so what? Convention delegates haven't yet met, and when we do we will nominate our candidate.

Some more history: incumbent Gerald Ford did not sew up the GOP nomination against a challenge by Ronald Reagan in 1976 until the delegates actually voted at their August convention. And Barry Goldwater didn't become the GOP standard bearer in 1964 until his convention met in July. Plus let's not forget that vice presidential candidates are usually selected at the last minute and are only ratified when the delegates vote.

The other legal issue that some are worried about is whether [Kamala Harris will be on the ballot in all 50 states](#) (and Washington, D.C). The answer is yes. State laws (even in Ohio where there was some issue about timing a few weeks back) mandate that Democratic and Republican party nominees appear on their ballots (or, to be precise, presidential electors pledged to the candidate).

Any outlier hanky-panky effort by Republicans would be enjoined by the courts based upon solid precedent. In any event, the Democrats' virtual roll call ahead of the convention puts that non-issue to rest.

So as we delegates start to pack our proverbial bags, the vice president has already locked up the nomination. Apart from the merits, her candidacy is far from unusual. Nine vice presidents have become president as a result of death or resignation, and another six, including Biden, were elected on their own —so most Americans are used to this kind of succession.

There is no way of knowing at this early point whether the general election polls will change as a result of the switch —although it is mighty tempting to say that a race between a former prosecutor and a current felon will shift the ground dramatically.

I should confess, however, that amid the many calls, there have been a few who have beseeched me not to vote for Kamala, even if she appears to be the overwhelming choice of my fellow delegates. Why? These folks back her, but think my support would jinx her campaign. My record is, to be honest, somewhat disconcerting.

In 2020, I was a campaign lawyer for Pete Buttigieg; same for Hillary in 2016. I trained thousands of poll workers for John Kerry in 2004, backed Bill Bradley over Al Gore in 2000, led the New York effort for Jerry Brown in 1992, and was deputy campaign manager in New York for Walter Mondale in 1984. I could go on, but I am sure you get the picture. So my friends and family are nervous about my supporting Kamala.

In fact, at a small meeting with Kamala several years ago as she pondered whether to run for president, I told her straight-out my reason why I shouldn't support her — my well-established jinx. She, of course, thought it was hilarious. Her husband, not so much (As it turned out, I wound up putting the kibosh on Mayor Pete instead.)

All of this may sound a bit crazy. But I've made my decision, and won't let superstition prevent me from taking the plunge. There is too much at stake in this election. I will, therefore, vote for Kamala, confident that this time I am backing a winner!

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