

Malkus' condition improves.

6-8-96

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CAMBRIDGE — Longtime Maryland legislator Frederick C. Malkus Jr. is in improving health in a Cambridge nursing home, his wife said Friday.

"He is tough. I'll have to admit that," Maggie Malkus said from her Dorchester County home Friday. "He is a fighter."

"Everything is doing better," she said.

Malkus, 83, had been hospitalized following a series of ailments including pneumonia and severe infections, Maggie Malkus said. He now is recover-

ing in the nursing home and hopes to go home in July.

The former state senator left office in 1994 after 48 years in the General Assembly.

He had up until his illnesses remained active in local issues, and most recently had dabbled in a move by Dorchester County Commissioners to close the county's liquor dispensary.

Malkus, who spent all but four years in the Legislature as a Democratic senator representing the mid-Shore, also had maintained his Cambridge law office after retiring from elective office.

His health has been a common topic of concern in Dorchester, where Malkus lives near the sweeping marshes of Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge.

The Route 50 bridge spanning the nearly two-mile-wide Choptank River at Cambridge carries the former lawmaker's name.

During a recent trip to Cambridge, Gov. Parris N. Glendening made it a point to say he had stopped to see Malkus in the nursing home, and that he is improving.

The governor said Malkus had talked about a proposal by Hyatt Hotels Corp. for a resort development in Cambridge.

Malkus had been hospitalized at Dorchester General Hospital in Cambridge and at Peninsula Regional Medical Center before being moved to the nursing home, his wife said.

He hopes to return home July 18, she said.