

MARYLAND POLITICS

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Schaefer And Bentley's Latest Pitch

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Good news for those who miss the wacky locutions of a certain former Maryland governor and the tart-talking, Japan-bashing ways of a certain former Maryland congresswoman:

No, no, relax, William Donald Schaefer and Helen Delich Bentley aren't running for anything, as far as we know. They're on the radio, stumping for a Baltimore restaurant, coming out squarely in favor of the New York strip and the rack of lamb.

"I never thought it would come to this: both of us out of work!" Schaefer says on the radio spot for McCafferty's restaurant in Baltimore's Mount Washington neighborhood.

The ads, which have been airing for about three weeks during Orioles games on WBAL radio (1090 AM), were written by Long Island adman Joe Cameron, but they capture some of Schaefer's mocking humor and Bentley's feisty grit.

"William Donald Schaefer, that's not true! You know, I can still run for governor any time I want," Bentley says in the radio spot. "Anyway, we've got to look on the bright side: Wow, we can dine at McCafferty's."

Schaefer agrees and observes that "the food in the Governor's Mansion didn't compare, even partially, to McCafferty's! But then, you never got a chance to eat at the mansion anyway."

Schaefer, after completing his two

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terms as governor in January, is now "of counsel" at the Baltimore law firm Gordon, Feinblatt, Rothman, Hoffberger and Hollander. Bentley, a five-term member of Congress who lost the Republican gubernatorial nomination to former state delegate Ellen R. Sauerbrey, is a consultant to the Maryland Port Administration.

Schaefer is hardly the first ex-governor to become a pitchman.

Most recently, his former colleagues from New York and Texas, defeated governors Mario Cuomo and Ann Richards, turned up on TV screens across America during this year's Super Bowl, hawking Doritos.

Schaefer and Bentley somehow fit their more modest venue. Except for when they're having a sandlot-style spat ("She'll have the prime rib." . . . "I will not, I want the rack of lamb!"), they pretty much read their scripts in a monotone. They might not want to quit those day jobs just yet.