

refused to comment on Bulger's condition. A hospital spokeswoman said she had no information on Bulger's condition Sunday night, and Bulger's lawyer, J. W. Carney Jr., could not be reached for comment.

Bulger, who is awaiting trial in a sweeping federal racketeering indictment that alleges he participated in 19 murders, has been jailed without bail since his capture in June 2011 in Santa Monica, Calif. It was at least the second time he has required hospitalization in the past year. Last December, he was treated at the hospital, then returned to the jail later the same day.

"I hope he's all right because I want him to hang in there," said Patricia Donahue, whose husband, Michael, was allegedly gunned down by Bulger in 1982 while giving a ride to another man who was the intended target. "I want him to go to trial. . . . I think he has a lot to say, and I want to hear it."

While he has always been a physical fitness buff, Bulger has for decades suffered from a common ailment that prompts him to take Atenolol, a beta blocker used to treat high blood pressure and improve blood flow to the heart.

Last week, several relatives of Bulger's alleged victims raised concerns about the gangster's health after his lawyer argued in court that he cannot possibly be ready for trial on the scheduled date, March 4, and asked for a postponement to November 2013. The judge has taken the request under advisement and is expected to rule this week.

After that hearing on Thursday, Carney described Bulger as "mentally very sharp" and said he was looking forward to testifying at his trial.

Steve Davis, whose 26-year-old sister Debra Davis was allegedly strangled by Bulger in 1981, said Sunday night that he was suspicious about the timing of Bulger's trip to the hospital.

"I'm very concerned," Davis said. "I don't think his health is a factor here. I think it's all a matter of stalling

AP/FILE

James "Whitey" Bulger has been jailed without bail since his capture in June 2011 in Santa Monica, Calif.

his case.”

Carney has argued that the evidence in the case, which spans several decades, is voluminous and Bulger’s right to a fair trial will be violated if he isn’t given adequate time to prepare his defense. Federal prosecutors have accused Bulger of trying to intentionally stall the trial, and they oppose any delay.

Bulger, a longtime FBI informant, is claiming that a former federal prosecutor promised him immunity from prosecution. He fled Boston shortly before his January 1995 federal racketeering indictment after his former FBI handler, John J. Connolly Jr. , warned him his arrest was imminent.

After more than 16 years on the run, Bulger, one of the FBI’s 10 Most Wanted, was captured June 22, 2011, in Santa Monica, along with his girlfriend, Catherine Greig. The couple had lived there for 15 years.

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