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BILL WOULD REQUIRE TRAINING OF BouncERS

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NEWS 05B

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Police have not filed charges in the death of Vincent Darling, but a lawmaker has introduced legislation that would require bouncers at bars and restaurants to receive training in handling disruptive patrons.

Darling, 41, died Dec. 2 after suffering neck trauma during a scuffle with employees at a Far North Side restaurant. Darling's family contends the employees used excessive force.

"Every life has a purpose. May this bill have the light of life," Darling's mother, Juanita, said yesterday at the Statehouse.

Sen. David Goodman, R-Bexley, said his bill would require that bouncers and other restaurant or bar employees involved in crowd control receive training in mediation techniques and physical restraint. The training would be overseen by the state Division of Liquor Control and include fines for noncompliance.

Some bar and restaurant managers contacted after Darling's death said they provide some training for bouncers. Others would support a training requirement if the state helps pay for it.

Detectives still are investigating Darling's death at Dick Clark's American Bandstand Grill, 100 Hutchinson Ave. They have not presented the case to prosecutors, Columbus Police Cmdr. Paul Denton said.

"Our sense was we would not file a criminal charge but send it directly to the grand jury," Denton said. "We still have some people to interview." He said the lead detective also has been busy with other cases.

Police have said at least one witness described Darling as intoxicated and creating a disturbance before bouncers became involved. An autopsy showed Darling's blood-alcohol content was 0.27 percent, more than twice the legal limit for driving.

Police and the restaurant have declined to identify the employees involved in the scuffle.

The Darlings have hired lawyer *Keith Karr* to investigate what they called the "wrongful

death" of Darling, a father of two young boys.

The family has not sued.

Karr yesterday said he has provided police with the names of witnesses who said Darling was not threatening. He was there with his longtime girlfriend, Donna Williams, the mother of his younger son.

"An independent witness, not associated with the family, said he was acting totally responsibly. He had kissed her (Williams), and that upon kissing her, that is when the bouncer came and confronted Mr. Darling," Karr said. "Mr. Darling was pushed out toward the door, he was choked -- and they applied more pressure -- and taken outside the door."

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Illustration: Photo appeared in newspaper, not in the archive.

Photo caption: Fred Squillante / Dispatch

Juanita Darling, left, and her son Freddie react as Ohio Sen. David Goodman, R-Bexley, talks about proposed legislation that would require training for bouncers. Freddie's brother Vincent died after a scuffle with employees of a restaurant on the Far North Side; the family contends excessive force was used.

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