

help young people recognize the value of their accomplishments. In addition to receiving this award, each student was asked to name the teacher who most influenced them during their high school career. These teachers are named as a National Distinguished Teacher and are invited to participate in the National Recognition Week.

These students have worked hard to achieve excellence and this award honors their hard work and perseverance. These students are remarkable because they have achieved not only academic excellence, but are also leaders in their schools and dedicated to community service. Each student has given back to the community that nurtured them. I am proud to recognize these four outstanding young people as New Hampshire's finest and congratulate them on the receipt of the White House Presidential Scholars Award. ●

HENRY PESTKA

● Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a man who has overcome great adversity to become a pillar of his community, Henry Pestka of Grand Rapids, MI.

Henry Pestka was born in Poland on July 29, 1922, the son of Saul and Marie Pestka. Saul Pestka was a builder and developer who taught his son his craft. After the Nazi occupation of Poland, Henry was interned in a number of concentration camps, including the notorious Auschwitz Death Camp.

In 1944, Pestka and two other prisoners escaped during a forced death march, and were found by members of the Free French Army. Henry joined the Polish Battalion of the Free French Army. He has the unique distinction of being not only one of the few survivors of Auschwitz Death Camp, but also a decorated combat veteran of the Allied cause in the Second World War. Tragically, both his parents and siblings perished. Henry was the only survivor.

In 1946, at the urging of his only living relatives, Henry immigrated to the United States and settled in Grand Rapids, MI. When Henry arrived, he could not speak English. He enrolled in night classes at Union High School and was given employment by a friend of his father's from Poland. In short, Henry came to the United States without money, with a very limited family, and unable to speak English.

In December 1948, Henry married Beatrice Bergman. Prior to the marriage, Henry had started working at Bergman Auto Supplies, selling auto parts and installing seat covers. In the late 1950's, Henry and his partner, Herman Bergman, began purchasing and developing property using the lessons gleaned from his father as a boy in Poland. For the past 40 years, Henry has developed shopping centers, office buildings, restaurants, apartment complexes, and industrial buildings. He has worked with major companies, both in the Grand Rapids area and across the United States.

Henry's proudest achievement was his tenure as building chairman for Congregation Ahavas Israel. He devoted a year of his life to this project and served without fee. Ultimately, in 1971, the beautiful structure was completed. At the time, Henry was honored by the Grand Rapids mayor, Bob Boelens, and by the entire congregation. In the foyer of the synagogue is an affecting mural depicting the 6 million innocent victims of Nazi genocide. In his own way, Henry has contributed not only to the memory of those who perished, but also built an institution to serve future generations including his own grandchildren.

Henry's philanthropy is legendary, particularly toward those institutions fighting bigotry or helping the sick and disabled. Among the organizations which he has consistently supported are the Anti-Defamation League, the Southern Poverty Law Center, the U.S. Holocaust Museum, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, the Arthritis Foundation, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, and the Salvation Army. On a local level, Henry has supported Hope Network, Project Rehab, and many, many others.

His life has been a testament to overcoming horrific adversity and prevailing. He has built a uniquely American life, for which he can be forever proud. I know that my Senate colleague will join me in honoring Henry Pestka. ●

CALIFORNIA CITIES FIGHT JUNK GUNS

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, earlier this year, I introduced legislation to prohibit the sale and manufacture of Junk Guns, or as they are also called, Saturday Night Specials. The importation of these cheap, easily concealable, and unsafe weapons has been prohibited since 1968, but their domestic production continues to soar.

In 1995, eight of the ten firearms most frequently traced at crime scenes were junk guns. These guns are the criminals' choice, and we must act now to get them out of our schools and our communities. Nationwide, gun violence is now the second leading cause of death of among children. In California, gun violence is number one. For the sake of our children, we must pass the Junk Gun Violence Protection Act.

My bill has received strong support from California's law enforcement leaders. The California Police Chiefs Association has endorsed my bill along with more than two dozen individual police chiefs and sheriffs representing some of California's largest cities and counties.

Today, I want to report on an extraordinary event that occurred last week in Oakland. On July 8, the mayors of 15 cities in California's East Bay joined together and pledged to get junk guns off the streets of their communities. These mayors said that they were frustrated by the 104th Congress' unwillingness to enact the common

sense reforms that my bill would make. Although they acknowledge that Federal legislation would be more effective than local ordinances, they have decided not to wait until Washington gets the message that these guns must be taken off our streets.

The cities of West Hollywood, San Francisco, Oakland, and Alameda have already passed ordinances to ban the sales of junk guns. More than a dozen municipalities in Alameda and Contra Costa counties are expected to follow soon. When junk guns are banned in these East Bay communities, it will create the largest junk gun-free zone in the country.

The courageous actions taken by these East Bay mayors provides real momentum to the movement to ban junk guns nationwide. I commend these communities for their leadership, and once again, I urge my colleagues to support S. 1654, the Junk Gun Violence Protection Act.

I ask that the following articles be printed in the RECORD.

The articles follow:

[From the Oakland Tribune, July 18, 1996]

ALAMEDA JOINS EAST BAY CITIES IN SHOOTING DOWN JUNK GUNS

(By Kathleen Kirkwood)

ALAMEDA.—The City Council has joined other East Bay cities in approving an ordinance banning the sale of junk guns; the so-called Saturday night specials.

The ordinance is patterned after a similar law in West Hollywood, now facing a court challenge on the grounds it is preempted by state regulations.

Several gun owners appealed to the Alameda council Tuesday to reject the law, saying it was a sham and couldn't be enforced because of overriding state law. Even if it were imposed, it couldn't stem the tide of gun-related crimes anyway, Herb Leong of San Francisco said.

"I don't believe this is a law that's worth your effort," Leong said. "What we need to do is change people. We can't change what they do by taking away a tool."

Local gun dealer James Figone said he doesn't sell junk guns, which are usually cheap and unreliable. But he said the city would be infringing on constitutional rights to bear arms.

"The whole point of these laws is to take guns out of the public's hands," Figone said.

Figone and others also criticized the ordinance's lack of a specific list of which guns would be targeted.

Instead, it states that the police chief will issue a list of firearms, at a future date, that meets the description of guns to be banned.

Generally, they're defined as cheap, poorly-manufactured, short-barreled handguns, Police Chief Barry Matthews said.

Matthews passed around five junk guns to council members that had been confiscated by Alameda police, calling them "garbage" weapons and "messengers of death."

He said it was hard to tell what effect the junk gun ban would have if imposed in Alameda.

"There will be a difference—to what degree I can't say," Matthews said.

In 1993, he said, junk handguns accounted for 8 out of 10 firearms most frequently confiscated by police in California. An estimated 90 percent of such guns available in the United States are manufactured in California. Import of such guns into the United States is already banned.