

they know that there is programs available for you. And one of the things the people have got to do is call a phone number. If your life has been turned upside down here, if you've been affected, you ought to call 1-800-621-3362, 1-800-621-3362. And that's where you can find out the help that is available.

What happened is, is that the Governor and his team quickly moved as this storm moved through this—moved through the State of Tennessee, and he made an assessment, and he sent the paperwork up to me. And because he moved quickly, I was able to sign a disaster declaration that then frees help. And so we want the folks to know that there is help from the Federal Government, and he can get the number I just outlined. But there's also going to be a lot of help from loving neighbors.

And we're sorry you're going through what you're going through. You know, life sometimes is unfair, and you don't get to play the hand that you wanted to play.

Mr. Spears. That's true.

The President. But the question is, when you get dealt the hand, how do you play it? And I've come away with this impression of the folks in Macon County: One, they're down-to-earth, good, hard-working people. They have a respect for the Al-

mighty. And this community is going to be as strong as ever. That's what I think.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir.

The President. I bet you feel the same way.

Mr. Spears. Yes, sir. If it wasn't for my friends, I don't know what I'd do.

The President. And you're going to find you got some new friends showing up too—

Mr. Spears. Appreciate it.

The President. —people you've never heard of, they don't know who you are, total strangers. But when they know there's a neighbor in need, they'll come and help you.

And I appreciate you giving me a chance to come by, and I know the folks traveling with me appreciate. We're so sorry you're going through what you're going through, but there's help, and that's what you've got to know.

Anyway, God bless. Thank you.

June Spears. Thank you.

Mr. Spears. Appreciate it.

The President. Yes. Hang in there, brother.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:43 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Philip N. Bredesen, Jr., of Tennessee.

The President's Radio Address February 9, 2008

Good morning. One of the most important jobs of any President is to find good men and women to lead Government agencies, preside over our courts, and provide vital services to the American people. So I have nominated talented individuals for these positions. Unfortunately, the Senate is not meeting its responsibility to consider these nominees in a timely manner. More than 180 of my nominees are waiting for confirmation. Some have been waiting for

more than a year. As a result, careers have been put on hold, families have been placed in limbo, and our Government has been deprived of the service of these fine nominees.

On Thursday, I stood with many of these nominees at the White House. They are decent and talented people. The Senate needs to confirm them to address important issues, from the economy to public safety to national security.

One of the most important institutions for America's economy is the Federal Reserve. The Fed decides monetary policy, and it sets key interest rates that have an impact on homeowners and businesses across our country. Yet the Senate has been delaying three of my nominations to the Fed for nearly 9 months. My nominees have valuable experience and skills, and I urge the Senate to confirm them as soon as possible.

Another important institution is the Federal Aviation Administration. The FAA plays a vital role in keeping you safe when you fly. In October, I nominated Bobby Sturgell to lead the FAA. Bobby has nearly 20 years of cockpit experience from his time as a Navy fighter pilot, Top Gun instructor, and commercial airline pilot. He's committed to addressing problems that have caused airline delays, and I urge Senators to put politics aside and confirm him to office.

In this time of war, we need a strong Department of Justice. Yet the Senate has not voted on nominations for seven senior leadership positions at the Department. One of those vacancies is for Deputy Attorney General. The Deputy Attorney General helps lead efforts to detect and prevent terrorist attacks at home.

I have selected an outstanding nominee for this position, Judge Mark Filip. This former prosecutor has earned a reputation for being fairminded and dedicated. Several years ago, the Senate confirmed him unanimously for a lifetime position on the Federal bench. Now I ask Senators to confirm him once again so he can help keep our Nation safe.

As Senators confirm these nominees, they must also confirm judges to the Federal bench. I have nominated highly qualified individuals who will rule by the letter of the law, not the whim of the gavel. Unfortunately, the Senate continues to delay votes for 28 of my judicial nominees. Three of my nominees for the court of appeals have waited nearly 600 days. These delays are irresponsible, they undermine the cause of justice, and I call on the United States Senate to give these nominees the up-or-down vote they deserve.

When men and women agree to serve in public office, we should treat them with respect and dignity, and that means giving them a prompt confirmation vote. When the Senate fails to give nominees a timely vote, it leaves important positions in our Government vacant, and it makes it harder for Presidents of both parties to attract good men and women to serve in these vital posts.

By working together, Republicans and Democrats can chart a better course. We can bring every nomination to the floor for a vote and give the American people the kind of public servants they deserve.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:25 p.m. on February 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 8, but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Honoring President Abraham Lincoln's 199th Birthday *February 10, 2008*

Welcome. Laura and I are glad you're here. Rex, thank you for taking the lead

for Ford's Theatre. If our—any citizen