

energy: ranches where cattle graze next to solar panels, farms supplying crops for biofuels. I've got a former State senator here who's helping farms manage manure in creative ways—[laughter]—in creative ways. [Laughter]

So our task as a nation has to be to get behind what you're doing. Our task has to be making sure that nothing stands in your way, that we remove any obstacles to your success. That's why we're doing more to connect rural America with broadband and expanding small-business loans and investing in homegrown American energy. That's why forums like this are important, so that we hear directly from you about what you need and what you're facing. And what's interesting is, in these conversations, one thing you notice: In Washington, you'd think that the only two ways of thinking about our problems is either Government is terrible and it has to be basically eliminated, or Government is the answer to every problem. But when you sit in some of these breakout sessions, I had no idea who was Democrat, who was Republican, who was Independent. What everybody understood was, there are times when Government can make a huge difference. There are times where that SBA office or that USDA office can make all the difference in the world. There are some boneheaded things the Government is doing that need to be fixed.

And so it's a very practical way of thinking about these problems. It's not either-or. It's a recognition that the prime driver of economic growth and jobs is going to be our people and the private sector and our businesses. But you know what, Government can help. Government can make a difference.

So I hope that I can count on you in the days ahead to lend your voice to this fight to strengthen our economy. I need you to keep

your pressure on your elected representatives for things like the payroll tax cuts or road construction funds or the other steps that will help to put our country back to work.

That's our great challenge. It has been my central mission for the last 2½ years. It has to be all of our central missions going forward. That's what ought to unite us as a country, regardless of party or ideology, because if we can do that, if we can put country ahead of party, I know that our future is bright. I know that our best days are ahead of us.

And Tom is actually—absolutely right. Not only do I continue to have absolute confidence in you, but you're what gives me strength. As I was driving down those little towns in my big bus—[laughter]—I'm—we slowed down, and I'm standing in the front, and I'm waving. I'm seeing little kids with American flags and grandparents in their lawn chairs and folks outside a machine shop. And passing churches and cemeteries and corner stores and farms, I'm reminded about why I wanted to get into public service in the first place.

Sometimes there are days in Washington that will drive you crazy. But getting out of Washington and meeting all of you and seeing how hard you're working, how creative you are, how resourceful you are, and how determined you are, that just makes me that much more determined to serve you as best I can as President of the United States.

So thank you very much, everybody. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. at Northeast Iowa Community College. In his remarks, he referred to Janda K. Heister, president, Premier Tooling & Manufacturing, Inc.; and Riley Pagett, president, Future Farmers of America.

Memorandum on Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians August 16, 2011

Memorandum for the Secretary of Homeland Security

Subject: Deferred Enforced Departure for Liberians

Since 1991, the United States has provided safe haven for Liberians who were forced to flee their country as a result of armed conflict and widespread civil strife, in part through granting Temporary Protected Status (TPS). The armed

conflict ended in 2003 and conditions improved such that TPS ended effective October 1, 2007. President Bush then deferred the enforced departure of the Liberians originally granted TPS. I extended that grant of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to September 30, 2011. I have determined that there are compelling foreign policy reasons to again extend DED to those Liberians presently residing in the United States under the existing grant of DED.

Pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States, I have determined that it is in the foreign policy interest of the United States to defer for 18 months the removal of any Liberian national, or person without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia, who is present in the United States and who is under a grant of DED as of September 30, 2011. The grant of DED only applies to an individual who has continuously resided in the United States since October 1, 2002, except for Liberian nationals, or persons without nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia:

- (1) who are ineligible for TPS for the reasons provided in section 244(c)(2)(B) of

- the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1254a(c)(2)(B);
- (2) whose removal you determine is in the interest of the United States;
- (3) whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States;
- (4) who have voluntarily returned to Liberia or his or her country of last habitual residence outside the United States;
- (5) who were deported, excluded, or removed prior to the date of this memorandum; or
- (6) who are subject to extradition.

Accordingly, I direct you to take the necessary steps to implement for eligible Liberians:

- (1) a deferral of enforced departure from the United States for 18 months from September 30, 2011; and
- (2) authorization for employment for 18 months from September 30, 2011.

BARACK OBAMA

Remarks at a Town Hall Meeting and a Question-and-Answer Session in Atkinson, Illinois August 17, 2011

The President. Hello, Atkinson! Thank you. Thank you, everybody. Thank you so much. Thank you. Everybody have a seat.

It is good to be back, back home. It is good to be back in Atkinson, good to be back in Henry County. I just came from the Whiteside County Fair. Got some Whiteside folks here. Spent some time with some cows. *[Laughter]*

I want to acknowledge a few people who are with us today, wonderful, wonderful folks. First of all, our Secretary of Transportation, Peoria's own Ray LaHood is in the house. Our outstanding Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack is here. Mayor Gus Junior is in the house. I told Gus that I didn't have any gray hair either when I took office. *[Laughter]* So I just

want you to know what you have ahead in store for you right here. *[Laughter]* But everybody tells me he's doing a great job.

I want to thank the Waffles family for—*[laughter]*—Wyffels, rather, excuse me. I haven't had lunch. *[Laughter]* I want to thank the Wyffels family for hosting us here today. Please give them a big round of applause.

I want to thank Lisa of Lisa's Place. Where's Lisa? Is that Lisa? Because Secret Service had to shut down the road and do all this stuff, I know some of you guys have not been able to enjoy her outstanding food. So as a consequence, my staff has been, I think, trying to eat up as much as possible. *[Laughter]* My understanding is I've