

focus and are paying attention, their instincts are sound and they know what makes this country great.

That's what we're going to be fighting for, and we've got 90 days to do it. So I hope you guys are onboard. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. at the residence of Harvey Weinstein and Georgina

Chapman. In his remarks, he referred to fundraiser cohosts actress Anne Hathaway, screenwriter Aaron Sorkin, and actress Joanne Woodward; and Republican Presidential candidate former Gov. W. Mitt Romney of Massachusetts. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Following a Meeting of the White House Rural Council *August 7, 2012*

Okay, good afternoon, everybody. I think all of you are aware that we are seeing devastating drought throughout the country. It is a historic drought, and it's having a profound impact on farmers and ranchers all across many States.

Now, at my direction, the Department of Agriculture, led by Secretary Vilsack, has been working with every other agency across the Federal Government to make sure that we are taking every single possible step to help farmers and ranchers to fight back and recover from this disaster.

We've already designated over a hundred—1,500 counties across 32 States as disaster areas, which gives qualified farmers access to low-interest emergency loans. We've also opened up more land for haying and grazing. And we've worked with crop insurance companies to give farmers a short grace period on unpaid insurance premiums, since some families will be struggling to make ends meet at the end of this crop year.

This has been an all-hands-on-deck response. I want to thank Tom for his leadership. But obviously, we've got a lot more to do, because a lot of folks are being affected by this.

So today the Department of Agriculture is announcing an additional \$30 million to get more water to livestock and restore land impacted by drought. The National Credit Union Administration is allowing an additional thousand credit unions to increase lending to small businesses. The Department of Transportation is ready to help more commercial truck drivers to provide much-needed supplies to farmers and ranchers. And the SBA, the Small Business

Administration, is working with other Government agencies to connect even more eligible farmers, ranchers, and businesses with low-interest emergency loans as well as counseling and workforce programs.

Now, those are the ideas that have already been presented and are in the process of being implemented, but my instructions to all the agencies is, we need to keep working and to see if there is more that we can do. And we're going to continue to solicit ideas from State and local organizations, faith-based organizations, non-for-profit groups, the private sector, and most of all, the farmers and ranchers that are directly impacted to find additional ways that we can help, because when there's a disaster like this, everybody needs to pull together.

Obviously, Congress has a role here. Congress needs to pass a farm bill that will not only provide important disaster relief tools, but also make necessary reforms and give farmers the certainty that they deserve. That's the single best way that we can help rural communities both in the short term, but also in the long term. And we've already seen some good bipartisan work done in the Senate. Now's the time for us to come together and go ahead and get this done. And my hope is, is that Congress, many of whom will be traveling back to their districts, in some cases in rural communities and see what's taking place there, will feel a greater sense of urgency and be prepared to get this done immediately upon their return.

In the meantime, my administration is going to use the full extent of our administrative powers to make sure that we're responding appropriately.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:21 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Remarks at a Campaign Rally in Denver, Colorado August 8, 2012

The President. Hello, Denver! Oh, it is good to be back in Denver.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you. Well, I tell you what, we win Colorado, I'll get 4 more years.

A couple of people I just want to acknowledge. First of all, I just want to say thank you to Sandra for that wonderful introduction. She is one tough and poised young lady. She was generous to stand up for her friend. She was brave to stand up for herself and an eloquent advocate for women's health. And I suspect she's going to be doing some even greater things as time goes on. So give her a big round of applause.

A couple other people I want to acknowledge: Your own mayor, Michael Hancock is in the house. One of the best Senators in the country, Michael Bennet is in the house. A passionate advocate for working families, Ed Perlmutter is here. My dear friend, campaign cochair, former mayor, former Secretary of Transportation and Energy—I'm getting tired just listing his résumé—Federico Pena is in the house. He's here somewhere. Where did Federico go?

And finally, I also want to acknowledge another campaign cochair, John Register, a veteran and Paralympian. We are very proud of him: John Register.

It's been 2½ weeks since I was last here in Colorado. And, well, as many of you know, I was in Aurora to meet those who lost loved ones during that terrible shooting. And I just had a chance to see some of the first-responders who helped to save lives and comfort families during that terrible, terrible day. Unfortunately, since that time, we've had another tragedy in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, where six mem-

bers of our community were killed as they entered into a house of worship.

And so I think we can all acknowledge, we've got to put an end to this kind of senseless violence, whether it's in Aurora, whether it's in Oak Creek, whether it's in Tucson, whether it's in cities all across America where too many lives are cut short because of senseless violence. This is going to have to stop. And as an American family—as one American family—we're going to have to come together and look at all the approaches that we can take to try to bring an end to it.

And I want you to all know that the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation remain with those in Aurora. And even though the perpetrators of these acts have received a lot of attention, attention on them will fade and what will be replaced are the stories of heroism and hope that we've seen here in Colorado and in Wisconsin and across the Nation. That's what we'll remember. That's what's going to matter. That's what we will value: the strength and the resilience and the care and the love of the American people.

Now, unless you've managed to completely avoid your television set—[laughter]—or your cable is broken, you are aware that there is a pretty intense campaign going on right now. And the reason it's intense is because the choice that we face in November could not be bigger. It's not just a choice between two candidates. It's not even just a choice between two parties. More than any election in recent memory, this is a choice between two fundamentally different paths for our country's future.

And the direction that you choose—the direction you choose when you walk into that voting booth 3 months from now—will have a direct impact not just on your lives, but on the