

responsibility, they've got to be able to participate in that growth. And every day, mayors are proving that you don't have to wait for the gridlock to clear in Congress in order to make things happen.

Now, Mayor Greg Stanton in Phoenix and Mayor Ralph Becker in Salt Lake City have ended chronic homelessness among veterans. In San Antonio, Mayor Castro has launched an early childhood education program designed to reach more than 22,000 4-year-olds over the next 8 years. In Fresno, Mayor Ashley Swearingin is spearheading projects to develop her city's downtown, including a high-speed rail station that's going to help attract jobs and businesses to the Central Valley. In Philadelphia, Mayor Nutter is helping young people reach higher during their summers by working with partners across the city to create thousands of summer jobs. In Tampa, Mayor Bob Buckhorn has gone, in his words, "all in," helping his constituents get covered with quality, affordable health insurance.

So mayors from both parties are a part of the climate Task Force, helping to make sure that cities have what it takes to withstand changes that may be taking place in our atmosphere in the years to come. More than a thousand mayors across America have signed agreements to cut dangerous carbon pollutions. I want to work with Congress whenever and wherever I can, but the one thing I'm emphasizing to all my Cabinet members is, we're not going to wait. Where Congress is debating things and hasn't been able to pull the trigger on stuff, my administration is going to move forward and we're going to do it in partnership with all of you. I've got a pen, and I've got a phone. And that's all I need.

Because with a pen, I can take executive actions. With a phone, I can rally folks from

around the country to help grow the economy and restore opportunity. And that's what today, hopefully, has been about. You've met with members of the administration. You've gotten to know each other, but also, hopefully, they've given you some insight into where we see the most promising programs, things that are working, best practices. And we want to cooperate and coordinate with you as effectively as we can to make sure that whatever works is getting out there and hitting the streets and actually having an impact on people's lives. And frankly, there are a lot of things that folks in this town could learn from all of you.

And I want to close by personally saying how much it means to me to have you here today. As Joe mentioned, I know a little something about cities. I got my professional career started as somebody working in some of the toughest neighborhoods in Chicago. But I also saw how hard work can transform communities block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood. And to see the resilience and the strength of people and the incredible vibrancy that cities bring to not just those who live within the boundaries of cities, but to entire regions, that's what you understand. And I want to make sure that I've got your back in everything that you do.

So I want to say thank you to all of you for making sure that your constituents are well served, but as a consequence, America is well served.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vice President Joe Biden. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Biden, who introduced the President.

Statement on the Situation in South Sudan

January 23, 2014

I welcome today's signing of a cessation of hostilities agreement in South Sudan, which is a critical first step toward building a lasting peace. Now South Sudan's leaders need to

work to fully and immediately implement the agreement and start an inclusive political dialogue to resolve the underlying causes of the conflict. The full participation of political de-

tainees currently being held by the Government of South Sudan will be critical to those discussions, and we will continue to work to expedite their release. I am grateful for the constructive role played by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and our partners in the region to advance these efforts.

The United States has long supported the aspirations of the people of South Sudan for independence, peace, and prosperity. In order to regain the trust of their people and the interna-

tional community, South Sudan's leaders must demonstrate their sustained commitment to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. They have an obligation to ensure that the lives of their people and future of their young country are not further marred by continued violence and that individuals who have committed atrocities are held to account. Those working for a more peaceful, democratic, unified South Sudan will continue to have a steady partner in the United States of America.

The President's Weekly Address

January 25, 2014

Hi, everybody. This week, I called members of my Cabinet to the White House to deal with a challenge that affects so many families and communities: the crime, the outrage, of sexual violence. Sexual assault is an affront to our basic decency and humanity. And it's about all of us, the safety of those we love most: our moms, our wives, our daughters, and our sons.

Because when a child starts to question their self-worth after being abused and maybe starts withdrawing or a young woman drops out of school after being attacked or a mom struggles to hold down a job and support her kids after an assault, it's not just these individuals and their families who suffer. Our communities—our whole country—is held back.

Over the past 5 years, we've stepped up our efforts to stop these crimes. And this week, we took another important step to protect young women at college. An estimated one in five women is sexually assaulted at college, and that's totally unacceptable. So I've created the White House Task Force To Protect Students From Sexual Assault. We're going to help schools do a better job of preventing and responding to sexual assault on their campuses, because college should be a place where our young people feel secure and confident so they can go as far as their talents will take them.

And we're going to keep working to stop sexual assaults wherever they occur. We'll keep strengthening our criminal justice system so police and prosecutors have the tools and

training to prevent these crimes and bring perpetrators to justice. We'll keep reaching out to survivors to make sure they're getting all the support they need to heal. We're going to keep combating sexual assault in our Armed Forces, because when a member of our military is attacked by the very people he or she trusts and serves with, that's an injustice that no one who volunteers to protect our Nation should ever endure.

Some of this is a job for government. But really, it's up to all of us. We've got to teach young people—men and women—to be brave enough to stand up and help put an end to these crimes. We've especially got to teach young men to show women the respect they deserve. I want every young man in America to know that real men do not hurt women. And those of us who are fathers have a special obligation to make sure every young man out there understands that being a man means recognizing sexual violence and being outraged by it and doing their part to stop it.

Perhaps most important, we need to keep saying to anyone out there who's ever been assaulted: You are not alone; we have your back. I've got your back.

I'm going to keep pushing for others to step up across my administration, in Congress, in State capitals, college campuses, and military bases all across our country. This is a priority for me, not only as President and Commander in Chief, but as a husband and a father of two extraordinary girls. And I hope it's a priority for