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Obama Extends Bush's 9/11 State of Emergency

Posted By [Jason Ditz](#)

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In a [letter issued to the heads of Congress today](#), President Barack Obama announced yet another one year extension of a State of National Emergency which has been going on in the United States since September 14, 2001. This means that as of Tuesday America will officially be entering its tenth year at an emergency posture them seems destined to last pretty much forever.

Established in 1976, the National Emergencies Act grants certain powers ([established in Title 50 Chapter 34 of the United States legal code](#)) to the president during times of emergency. Amongst the law's primary purposes was to prevent a US president from creating an open-ended state of emergency.

Ironically however the law provides for the annual renewal of an existing state of emergency with only a notification of Congress required. This has meant, in a state of open-ended warfare, Presidents Bush and Obama have been able to maintain a state of open-ended emergency anyhow.

The current state of emergency empowers the president in a number of manners, including allowing him to suspend officer personnel laws related to the US military, [suspending all legal limits on the number of commissioned officers](#), authorizations to [grow the size of the military](#) beyond the legal appropriations, waive limits on reserves,

and the [right to recall retirees to active duty](#). The claim of “time of emergency” has also been cited in countless other measures taken by the presidents to expand their own power.