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Is lifetime security protection necessary for former presidents due to increased global threats, or can the presidents afford to provide it themselves?

Some lawmakers have debated that fact after President Barack Obama signed legislation giving all future presidents lifetime protection by the Secret Service.

POLITICO [reported](#) that the Former Presidents Protection Act of 2012 will return lifetime security protection to presidents and spouses who served after Jan. 1, 1997, unless they remarry, and gives their children protection until age 16.

[According](#) to [breitbart.com](#), a law passed in 1994 during the Clinton Administration gave presidents security protection for ten years after leaving the office. George W. Bush and Obama are the only surviving presidents to be affected by the new legislation.

Presidents have been receiving Secret Service protection since 1901 after William McKinley was assassinated, [according](#) to Yahoo! News. In 1965, Congress authorized the Secret Service to protect former presidents for their lifetime.

ABC News [notes](#) that presidential families can decline the security. When President George Herbert Walker Bush left office, wife Barbara Bush dismissed her security agents when she returned to Texas.

And Richard Nixon hired a private security firm after he relinquished Secret Service protection in 1985.

Representative Trey Gowdy of South Carolina introduced the bill. Referring to Obama and George W. Bush, he said, [according](#) to BuzzFeed Politics, "Both men are young, enjoy good health, and have long lives ahead of them post-Presidency. I hope my colleagues will make sure that the person and the symbol of our Presidency is safe and secure for the duration of their natural lives."