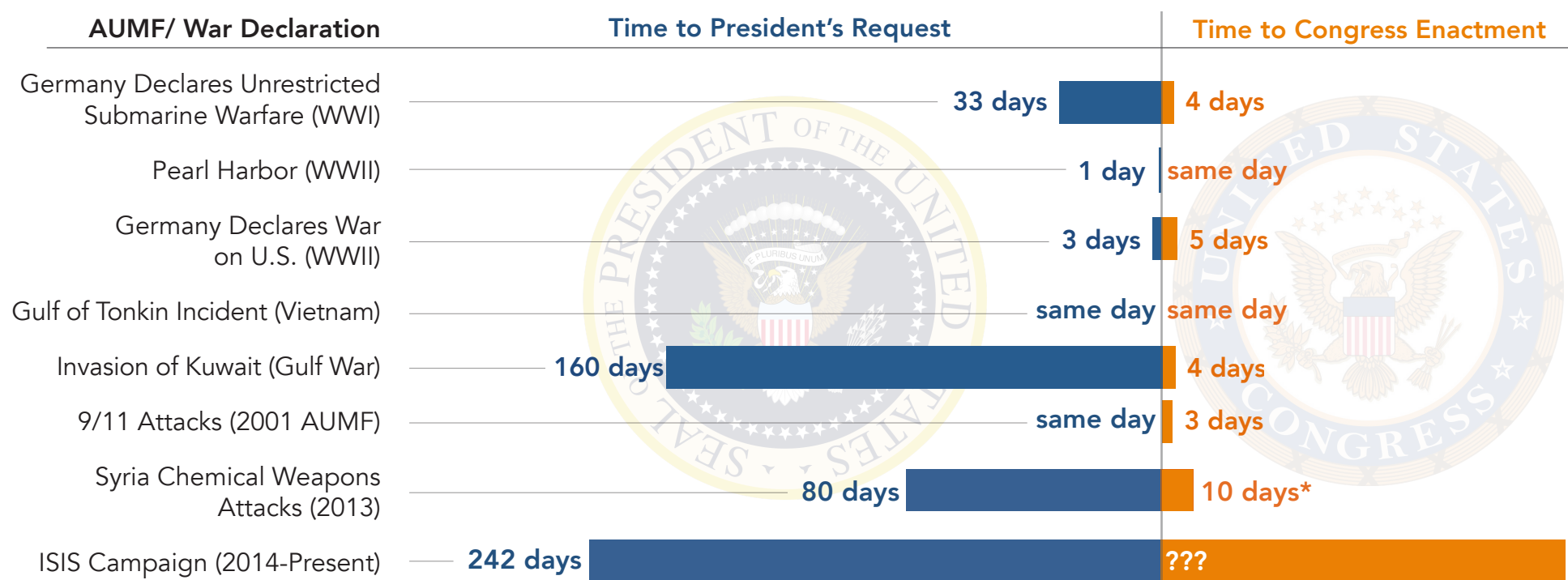


# AUTHORIZING MAJOR CONFLICTS

Some worry that Congress cannot act quickly in times of national crisis to authorize war powers, and argue that the continued threat of terrorism means the President needs broad standing for use of force, as long as the President provided Congress with a list of targeted groups or locations. We disagree. A standing AUMF would codify war without end and go against our history and our traditions.

As the chart below shows, Congress has traditionally acted quickly to enhance the President's already broad powers to protect the nation when the President asks for that authority, and Congressional hesitation to pass a new AUMF is only a recent phenomenon. The lack of an AUMF for the fight against ISIS in Syria stands alone, even when compared with previous conflicts that lasted years or even decades. While it may be ordinarily difficult to get 535 members of Congress to agree on anything, history has shown that when it comes to national security, they can and do act quickly and decisively.



In 2002, Congress passed an authorization for use of military force against Iraq. We have not included it in this chart because that war lacked a triggering event. But President Bush made the case for authorization in a UN General Assembly Speech on September 12, 2002 and Congress passed an authorization on October 16, 2002.

\* Though the Senate Foreign Relations committee approved an AUMF, the President's request for use of military force against Syria's chemical weapons program and facilities was tabled following the negotiated removal of Syria's chemical weapons between the United States and Russia.