

# Three branches of the federal government essay

[Government](#)



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How effectively do the three branches of the Federal government check each other? The checks and balances system was put in place in order to stabilize the separation of powers.

However, questions have arisen regarding how effective and credible the checks and balances system really is; debating whether some branches have more power than others. According to the constitution the legislative branch is to make the laws, the Judicial branch is to review the laws to be sure that they are constitutional, and the executive branch is to enforce the laws. Each branch provides checks and reviews on the other branches to ensure separation of powers. The president is named by the Constitution as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, giving him an incredibly powerful position in times of war. The Framers worried that the president's wartime role was too powerful, in fact, and thus gave Congress a powerful set of checks and balances on the president's war powers.

Only Congress, not the president, has the power to declare war. Perhaps even more important, only Congress has the power to pay for wartime expenses. That means that if the president tries to launch an ill-advised military escapade, Congress can effectively pull the plug, forcing the president to bring his troops home by refusing to fund their continued deployment. This is considered effective as it means that the president has to involve congress to gain representation of the country before making big decisions. However, the president has exploited his role as commander in chief to effectively take over Congress power to declare war.

For example. President Bush gave congress false intelligence in order for them to authorize the War on Terror, an international military campaign which included the war in Afghanistan launched in 2001 and the war in Iraq launched in 2003. A "bill" is introduced when a member of Congress decides to create a new law. Each bill is first assigned to a committee for review where the bill is tabled, or set aside, if the committee decides the bill is not worthy. The bill is sent to the entire house for debate if the committee decides the bill is worthy of further action. If the bill passes, it is sent to a joint committee to sort out any differences the two houses of Congress have concerning a bill.

When both houses agree on a bill, the Speaker of the House and the vice president sign it. The bill must be signed before being sent to the president. However, the president has the power to veto bills passed by congress, either changing it (line item veto) or reject it completely. This could be considered ineffective as it gives the president the authority to override the majority, on the other hand congress can also override the veto via a two-thirds vote with both houses voting separately, after which the bill comes law.

An example of how checks and balances can be effective is to do with judicial review.