

Eliminate Grants within the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

SAVINGS IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2016-2020	2016-2025
\$1,358	\$1,387	\$1,417	\$1,449	\$1,482	\$1,513	\$1,551	\$1,590	\$1,629	\$1,674	\$7,093	\$15,050

Heritage Recommendation:

Eliminate state and local grants administered by the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). This proposal saves \$1.4 billion in 2016, and \$15.1 billion over 10 years.

Rationale:


The majority of the programs under the OJP umbrella deal with problems or functions that lie within the jurisdiction of state and local governments and should therefore be handled by state and local officials. Grants from the OJP are given to state and local governments for many criminal justice purposes, including local police officer salaries, state corrections, court programs, and juvenile justice programs.

To address criminal activity appropriately, the national government should limit itself to handling tasks that state and local governments cannot perform by themselves. The tendency to search for a solution at the national level is misguided and problematic. For example, juvenile delinquents and criminal gangs are a problem common to all states, but the crimes that they commit are almost entirely and inherently local in nature and regulated by state criminal law, law enforcement, and courts. The fact that thefts by juveniles occur in all states does not mean that these thefts are a problem requiring action by the national government.

State and local officials, not the federal government, are responsible for funding the state and local criminal justice programs. OJP subsidizes the routine, day-to-day functions of state and local criminal justice programs. When Congress subsidizes routine state and local criminal justice programs in this manner, it effectively reassigns to the federal government the powers and responsibilities that fall squarely within the expertise, historical control, and constitutional authority of state and local governments. The responsibility to combat ordinary crime at the local level belongs wholly, if not exclusively, to state and local governments.

Additional Reading:

- David B. Muhlhausen, “Get Out of Jail Free: Taxpayer-Funded Grants Place Criminals on the Street Without Posting Bail,” Heritage Foundation *WebMemo* No. 3361, September 12, 2011, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2011/09/get-out-of-jail-free-criminals-on-the-street-without-posting-bail>.
- David B. Muhlhausen, “Drug and Veterans Treatment Courts: Budget Restraint and More Evaluations of Effectiveness Needed,” testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime and Terrorism of the United States Senate, July 19, 2011, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/testimony/2011/07/drug-and-veterans-treatment-courts-budget-restraint-and-more-evaluations-of-effectiveness-needed>.
- David B. Muhlhausen, “The Second Chance Act: Budget Restraint and More Evaluations of Effectiveness Needed,” testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security of the United States House of Representatives, September 29, 2010, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/testimony/the-second-chance-act-budget-restraint-and-more-evaluations-of-effectiveness-needed>.

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- David B. Muhlhausen, “Byrne JAG and COPS Grant Funding Will Not Stimulate the Economy,” statement before the Senate Judiciary Committee, May 12, 2009, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/testimony/byrne-jag-and-cops-grant-funding-will-not-stimulate-the-economy>.
 - David B. Muhlhausen, “The Youth PROMISE Act: Outside the Scope and Expertise of the Federal Government,” testimony before the Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security of the United States House of Representatives, July 15, 2009, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/testimony/the-youth-promise-act-outside-the-scope-and-expertise-of-the-federal-government>.
 - David B. Muhlhausen, “Where the Justice Department Can Find \$2.6 Billion for its Anti-Terrorism Efforts,” Heritage Foundation *Backgrounder* No. 1486, October 5, 2001, <http://www.Heritage.org/research/reports/2001/10/where-the-justice-department-can-find-26-billion>.

Calculations:

Savings are expressed as budget authority as reported on pages 230–231 of “Analytical Perspectives, Budget of the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2015, Table 29-1. Federal Programs by Agency and Account,” http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/budget/fy2015/assets/29_1.pdf. Budget authority is not provided for 2025, but is assumed to increase at the same rate as the geometric mean of the previous nine years.