

Coburn Amendment #403 -- To eliminate duplication, fragmentation, and overlap within the 253 Department of Justice grants within 10 different offices.

In 2012, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found the Department of Justice (DOJ) is administering 253 grants for crime prevention, law enforcement, and crime victim services costing about \$3.9 billion a year. Justice's Inspector General also noted the fragmentation increases costs, and recommended better coordination to ensure grants are not made to the same grantee for the same or similar purposes.

This amendment allows the appropriate committees to reduce the deficit through eliminating, consolidating, or reforming duplicative DOJ grants outlined in GAO's annual report to reduce program duplication.

GAO outlined DOJ grants under the following categories:

Grants for Victims Assistance, 56 grants
Technology and Forensics, 41 grants
Juvenile Justice, 33 grants
Enhancing Policing, 23 grants
Justice Information Sharing, 12 grants
Courts, 21 grants
Community Crime Prevention Strategies, 17 grants
Mental Illness, Substance Abuse, and Crime, 8 grants
Corrections, Recidivism, and Reentry, 20 grants
Multipurpose, 22 grants

253 Duplicative Programs: The Department of Justice (DOJ) administers 253 grants for crime prevention, law enforcement, and crime victim services through the Office of Justice Programs, the Office on Violence Against Women, and the Community Oriented Policing Services Office. These three offices awarded over 11,000 grant awards in 2010, but GAO reported that DOJ officials do not track the flow of grants to subgrantees and do not know for what purposes and activities the subgrantees are using the money. DOJ officials even told GAO that they encourage applicants to apply for as many DOJ grants as possible.

Costs \$3.9 billion a year: The DOJ gave out \$3.9 billion in grants in 2010, and since 2005, the DOJ has been given \$30 billion for grants. One grant recipient told GAO that they had received so much money from the DOJ that they planned on returning some of the money because it was more than they needed.

Excessive Duplication: The DOJ does not assess or evaluate its grant programs to determine if they overlap or duplicate each other or to determine where possible, they should combine and consolidate grant programs. GAO found instances where the DOJ awarded multiple grants “to the same applicants whose applications described similar- and in some cases, the same- purposes for using the grant funds.”¹ In addition, grant recipients may choose to give a portion of their grants to subgrantees. Those subgrantees may also directly apply for grants from the DOJ. GAO reports that the DOJ is “at risk of unintentionally awarding funding from multiple grant programs to grant recipients in the same communities for the same or similar purposes because it does not consistently and routinely check for any unnecessary duplication in grant application.”

¹ GAO-12-342SP: 2012 Annual Report: Opportunities to Reduce Duplication, Overlap and Fragmentation, Achieve Savings, and Enhance Revenue. Government Accountability Office. February 2012.