

Improving the Effectiveness of the JAG Program - *A Proposal*

- ❖ Increase overall accountability and coordination in the Justice Assistance Grant program.
- ❖ Improve the effectiveness of JAG funds in rural areas.
- ❖ Require statewide planning using a community engagement model engaging local government, law enforcement and nonprofit providers.
- ❖ Draw upon evidence-based data and nationwide best practices.
- ❖ Task states with overseeing grants up to \$100,000.
- ❖ Ensure continued local control over JAG funds while increasing coordination and effectiveness of local spending.

PROPOSAL FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE JAG PROGRAM

Before and After JAG: How two programs became one

- The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Grant Program (Byrne) of 1988 grew out of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration created in 1968 to assist states and local governments in reducing crime and improving the functioning of the criminal justice system.
- Byrne grants were allocated based on population to the states, which were required to pass through a certain percentage (commonly, 60 percent) to local law enforcement agencies (based on the state/local share of criminal justice spending in the state.) All spending had to conform to the statewide strategic crime prevention and control plan.
- In 1995, a new Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG) program was funded to provide additional, direct support to local law enforcement agencies. The Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) awarded grants directly to larger urban jurisdictions without coordination with Byrne-funded programs. States awarded the LLEBG grants to the smaller jurisdictions on a competitive basis.
- Congress merged the two programs into the Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program in 2005. The state and local funding streams remained separate with no requirement for coordinated planning. The original state planning function under Byrne was not retained.
- Grants to local jurisdictions are awarded by BJA based on violent crime data. Grants of \$10,000 or less are managed by the state; all others by BJA.

Recommendations for Improving the Effectiveness of JAG

The JAG program would retain its current two-pronged structure of: 1) an allocation to states with a required pass-through to localities (based on the state/local share of in-state funding); and, 2) direct grants to localities from BJA.

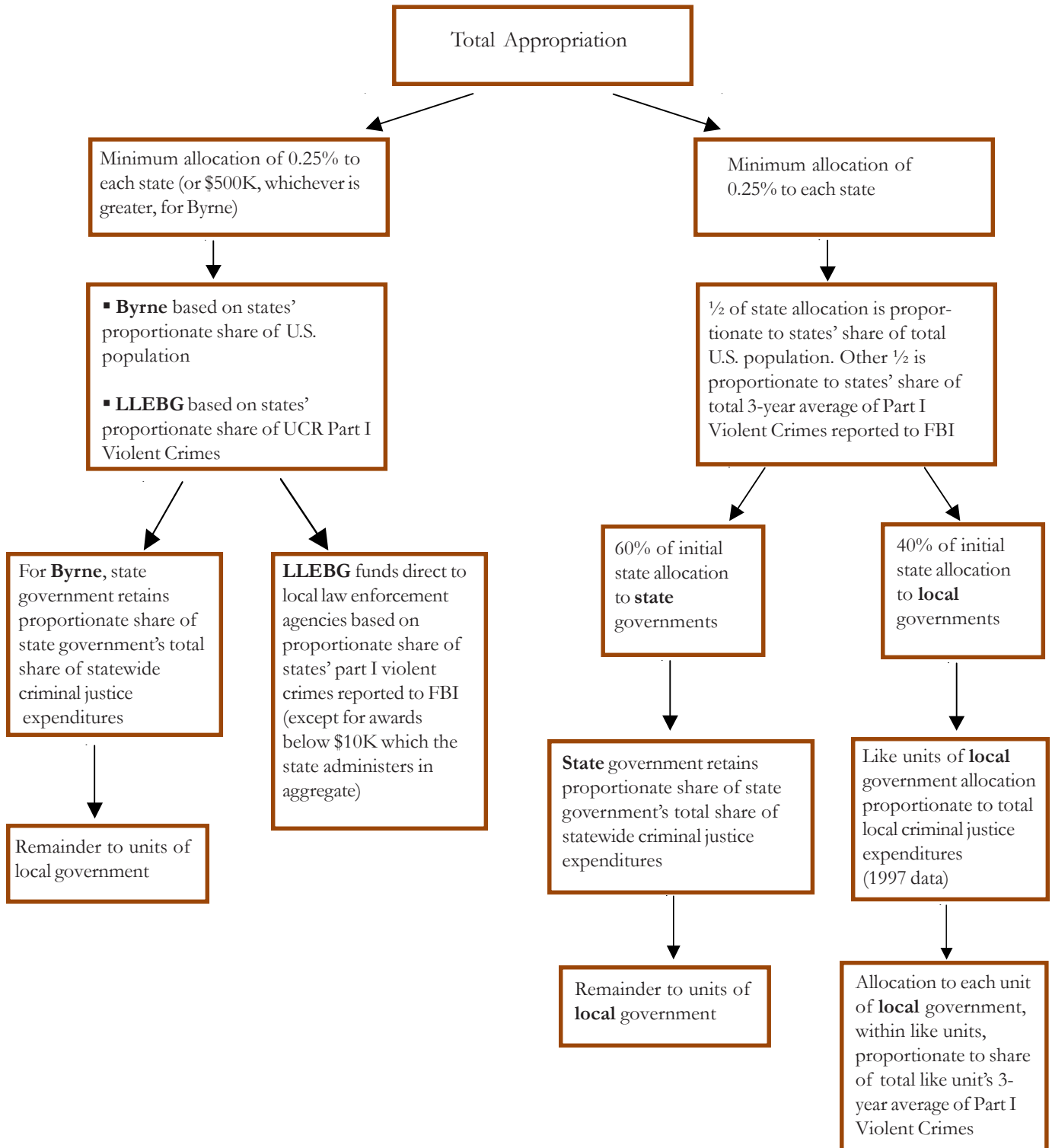
Overall effectiveness of the program, however, could be increased if states resumed a more meaningful coordination role by involving local partners in comprehensive strategic planning and by assuming oversight over a greater portion of the BJA direct grants, as follows:

- Grants under \$10,000 to local jurisdictions would continue to be awarded by the states.
- Grants between \$10,000-\$100,000 (or for jurisdictions over a certain population), would be awarded by BJA but sent through the states as "directed pass-through" grants. DOJ would continue to make the awards, but the state would provide technical assistance, management and oversight. Grants over \$100,000 to the largest jurisdictions would continue to be managed by BJA, with notification to the state.
- States could not lay claim to local funds, but states would help facilitate and coordinate local spending.
- The statewide plan would be developed using a community engagement model. Planning would be guided by a task force appointed by the state administering agency. Members would represent state and local government, law enforcement and non-profit service providers offering expertise across all program areas of JAG.
- State plans should be evidence-based, supported by technical assistance provided by BJA.
- At the local community's option, the state could pool resources for regional projects. Any grant funds not claimed by local jurisdictions would be used to address local or regional priorities identified in the statewide strategic plan.
- Unobligated balances would remain in the JAG program for redistribution.
- The statewide planning function should not become an unfunded mandate on state or local government.

COMPARISON OF THE BYRNE/LLEBG AND JAG FORMULAS

Byrne & LLEBG Formulas

JAG Formula



JAG GRANT AWARDS (FY 06)

Number of Grants Above and Below \$100,000 by State

State	<\$100,000	>\$100,000	Grand Total	State	<\$100,000	>\$100,000	Grand Total
Alabama	39	4	43	Montana	24		24
Alaska	7	1	8	Nebraska	8	2	10
Arizona	34	6	40	Nevada	7	3	10
Arkansas	33	3	36	New Hampshire	16	1	17
California	235	31	266	New Jersey	61	9	70
Colorado	27	4	31	New Mexico	28	2	30
Connecticut	23	3	26	New York	31	8	39
Delaware	4	2	6	North Carolina	84	7	91
Florida	124	26	150	North Dakota	12		12
Georgia	67	9	76	Ohio	49	8	57
Hawaii	2	2	4	Oklahoma	26	2	28
Idaho	20	1	21	Oregon	25	2	27
Illinois	57	5	62	Pennsylvania	44	3	47
Indiana	35	7	42	Rhode Island	11	1	12
Iowa	22	3	25	South Carolina	65	6	71
Kansas	21	3	24	South Dakota	5	1	6
Kentucky	17	4	21	Tennessee	50	4	54
Louisiana	42	7	49	Texas	108	15	123
Maine	15	1	16	Utah	17	3	20
Maryland	24	5	29	Vermont	9		9
Massachusetts	44	8	52	Virginia	34	11	45
Michigan	66	8	74	Washington	49	5	54
Minnesota	32	2	34	West Virginia	18	1	19
Mississippi	40	1	41	Wisconsin	20	3	23
Missouri	34	4	38	Wyoming	15		15
Grand Total				1880	247	2127	

Data provided by The Bureau of Justice Statistics

BJA GRANT AWARDS TO LOCAL JURISDICTIONS (FY 06)

