

# AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

Office of Public Affairs

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### STATEMENT ON 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY CURES

**ROCKVILLE, MD** – The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, an organization representing more than 12,000 scientists in the United States and globally, applauds the efforts of Rep. Fred Upton, R-Mich., and Rep. Dianna DeGette, D-Colo., to create bipartisan legislation that supports the biomedical research enterprise to improve the quality of life and well-being of Americans suffering from diseases which today have no cure. The 400-page discussion draft marks the beginning of an important conversation among policy makers, patients and scientists across the country.

Public Affairs Director Benjamin Corb said, “To see the energy and effort that went into this discussion draft is a welcomed sign from Congress that there is support for biomedical research and innovation – a sector that has been dealt some difficult budgetary blows in this era of austerity. ASBMB appreciates the opportunity to participate in this valuable discussion and will provide comments through the formal commenting mechanisms.” Corb went on to state that as currently drafted, the ASBMB could not endorse the legislation.

“A critical part of the treatment and cures story is discovery. Understanding the underlying mechanism of disease is essential to develop life-saving therapies to patients in need,” Corb explained. “Unfortunately, substantive support for discovery research at the National Institutes of Health is not included in this proposal. Individual investigators at universities across the country need more resources to understand how diseases affect human health, in order to lay the foundation for drug development. Often these breakthroughs are identified not through targets specified by policies, but by investigator initiated research and curiosity.”

The ASBMB will provide detailed recommendations to the U.S. House Energy and Commerce Committee on areas that are of concern to its members and also recommendations on how the proposal can be improved to adequately support scientists and patients.

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