

# AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

Office of Public Affairs

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### STATEMENT ON STATE OF THE UNION

**ROCKVILLE, MD** – The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, an organization representing more than 12,000 scientists in the United States and globally, praises President Barack Obama for reaffirming his administration’s commitment to support the nation’s scientific research and development capabilities in tonight’s State of the Union address, and calls on the President and Congress to take the actions necessary to sustain American scientific enterprise.

Said Public Affairs Director Benjamin Corb, “Following two-years of painful budget cuts in which the scientific community has been continually asked to do more with less, tonight’s comments make clear that this administration respects the need for America to be the global leader in scientific breakthroughs and innovation. Tonight, we call on the President, and Congress to move forward with an agenda that supports and sustains the nation’s scientific enterprise, which will strengthen the health of Americans, and the economy.”

Specifically, ASBMB has identified a legislative agenda, which would provide a path toward growing American global preeminence in science. This agenda includes:

- **Robust, reliable funding.** Scientific progress is hindered by an unreliable stream of funding, and experiments cannot be paused while we wait for better economic days. The closing of laboratories and loss of talented experts in the various scientific fields cannot be recovered readily. Congress must find a long-term solution to eliminate sequestration, and develop a plan for sustainable growth in federal investments in basic research at agencies such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation.
- **Immigration reform.** The United States must retain the world’s best and brightest minds following their education at many of America’s finest universities. The Senate-passed immigration-reform bill provides a path to citizenship for graduates with an advanced degree in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics field, and the House should take similar action as well.
- **Take politics out of science funding.** Whether it’s restrictions put on federal scientists’ ability to travel to scientific meetings across the country or continued attacks on peer-reviewed science from groups looking to make political gains, Congress must protect the nation’s scientific research enterprise with oversight that ensures the nation’s resources are being used properly, but allows scientific discovery to occur at its natural pace.

“Policies such as making permanent the research and development tax credit for businesses that invest their own capital in science and growing investments in research at the NIH and NSF will open doors for scientific discoveries. These discoveries improve the quality of life and well-being of Americans and open new economic opportunities for business across the country,” said Corb. “Research has done exactly that over the past 70 years benefiting people from all walks of life and inspiring them to make the discoveries that save lives and launch industries. A robust federal investment in scientific research makes this possible.”