

## **ASBMB STATEMENT ON REASSIGNMENT OF BARDA DIRECTOR DR. RICK BRIGHT**

April 22, 2020

The following is a response from Benjamin Corb, public affairs director for the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, on the reassignment of Rick Bright, director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA).

“The abrupt transfer of Dr. Bright out of his role leading a key federal agency helping to mount a response to the COVID-19 pandemic comes as a surprise to many in the medical and scientific community. If today’s comments from Dr. Bright in the New York Times are true – and he was removed from his role for political reasons and for supporting a science-based decision-making process regarding potential therapeutics to combat the virus – we are concerned with the White House politicizing science and experts during a crisis.

Science should not be politicized. Scientists, doctors, and public health experts are critical to planning and executing a national response to a once-in-a-lifetime public health crisis. Political leaders should listen to the advice of experts, and policy decisions should be made using the best evidence and data available.”