

Statement

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

Office of Public Affairs

Rockville, MD 20852 Fax: 301.881.2080

March 4, 2014

Contact: Benjamin Corb
240.283.6625 (office)
202.841.2701 (cell)
bcorb@asbmb.org

STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FISCAL 2015 BUDGET

ROCKVILLE, MD – The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, an organization representing more than 12,000 scientists in the United States and globally, thanks President Barack Obama for reaffirming his administration's commitment to strengthening the nation's scientific research, development and education capacities in his fiscal 2015 budget. President Obama's FY15 budget calls for increasing the budgets of several federal science funding agencies, including a 1 percent increase to the National Institutes of Health (\$30.2 billion) and a nearly 3 percent increase to the National Science Foundation (\$7.3 billion).

"We are pleased that the President recognizes America's role in the global national research enterprise and how the federal government can empower our researchers," said Benjamin Corb, public affairs director for the ASBMB. "Any funding increase in times of austerity is of significant benefit for the community. However, members of the community are concerned that the President's request for the NIH is still below pre-sequester levels of funding for the agency. The scientific community still needs help to recover from these cuts."

President Obama signed the Budget Control Act into law in 2011 placing caps on federal spending through 2021 and establishing sequestration as a fail-safe mechanism to enforce the caps. In FY13, a failure to agree to a budget under the BCA caps caused sequestration to eliminate over 5 percent, or \$1.5 billion, of the NIH budget. This resulted in over 600 grants going unfunded and more than 1,000 scientists losing funding for their research. While the Ryan-Murray budget agreement resulted in nearly \$1 billion being restored to the NIH for FY14, this made up for only a portion of the losses due to sequestration.

Said Corb, "Austerity measures such as the BCA caps and the sequester, are the biggest threats to sustaining scientific research [and attract and train new generations of scientists]. These poorly designed budgeting tools only hinder American scientific progress, and there is a real possibility that the U.S. will lose its position as the global leader in biomedical research because of sequester."

The ASBMB strongly urges the President and Congress to remove the BCA caps and sequestration altogether while finding a fiscally responsible mechanism that addresses our nation's debt and deficit. Furthermore, the ASBMB is advocating for \$32 billion for the NIH and \$7.6 billion for the NSF to prevent further erosion of the purchasing power of these federal agencies and set the nation on a course to robust growth for this fundamental American enterprise.

###