

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

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STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FY16 BUDGET PROPOSAL

ROCKVILLE, MD – The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, an organization representing more than 12,000 scientists in the United States and globally, supports the President Obama's fiscal 2016 funding request for biomedical research funding agencies like the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. For nearly a decade now, funding for the NIH has been stagnant, making it more difficult for the nation's biomedical scientists to secure funding for research that will lead to breakthrough treatments and cures and improve the quality of life and well-being of Americans. The result of these essentially flat budgets has been historically low success rates for scientists applying for grants and a drop in purchasing power to mid-1990's levels of funding.

On NIH funding, which Obama proposed a \$1 billion increase for FY16, the ASBMB applauds the request. "The president's support for the biomedical research enterprise is appreciated and, frankly, needed as agencies like the NIH find themselves in a historically challenging fiscal environment," said Public Affairs Director Benjamin Corb. "Especially critical at the NIH are proposed investments in discovery and basic research, in which the president and NIH Director Francis Collins renew their commitment to support this critical area of research."

Policy Analyst Chris Pickett echoed those remarks in comments on National Science Foundation funding. "With the president's proposed increase, the NSF, which has always been an exemplary steward of the taxpayers' dollars, would be able to fund groundbreaking scientific research at universities across the country." The NSF would see over a 5 percent increase in funding, to \$7.7 billion, if Obama's budget request was to be enacted.

Obama's proposal, however, is not likely to pass Congress. "While the president's budget is an important step forward, unwise fiscal policies such as spending caps and sequestration remain a serious threat to investments in critical areas such as science research," said Corb. "Until Congress takes action to reverse the austerity measures put in place, the nation will continue to have insufficient resources to meet the needs of the scientific enterprise and the American people."

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