Allyn Howlett,

Welcome to the new ASBMB Advocate! This monthly newsletter will keep you up to date on the policy issues affecting scientists across the country. Below you'll find regional and national science policy news as well as our top picks from our blog, the ASBMB Policy Blotter. To keep getting these monthly newsletters, sign up to be a part of our Local Advocates Network.

**Last month’s top stories from the ASBMB Policy Blotter:**

If this isn’t war, then peace concerns me

Earlier this week, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., and Rep. Lamar Smith, R-Texas, penned an op-ed for Politico titled, “No, the GOP Is Not at War With Science.” It is an eye-catching title for a science policy advocate like myself who is looking to read the tea leaves on what this new Congress will be like for the scientific community. Read more on the ASBMB Policy Blotter.

Apply for the ASBMB science policy fellowship

The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology is now accepting applications for its science policy fellowship. This 12-18 month position is the perfect bridge for those looking to transition from the bench into a career in policy. Information about the qualifications and responsibilities of the fellow as well as the application instructions can be found here. Applications are due Feb. 11. Read more on the ASBMB Policy Blotter.

What we’re watching in 2015: 21st Century Cures

In the spring of 2014, Reps. Diana DeGette, D-Colorado, and Fred Upton, R-Michigan, made an important announcement concerning scientists. The U.S. House Energy and Commerce committee, chaired by Upton, would pursue an initiative they were calling the 21st Century Cures initiative. The aim of this project was to identify regulatory and legislative hindrances that slowed promising therapies from reaching the American people. Read more on the ASBMB Policy Blotter.

**Newly elected members from your region:**

The 114th Congress was sworn in on Jan. 6. There are 58 new representatives and 13 new senators. New members of Congress from your region are:

- Mark Walker, R-NC-6
- David Rouzer, R-NC-7
- Ryan Costello, R-PA-6
- Brendan F. Boyle, D-PA-13
- Don Beyer, D-VA-8
- Barbara Comstock, R-VA-10
- Alex Mooney, R-WV-2
- Evan Jenkins, R-WV-3
- Tom MacArthur, R-NJ-3
- Bonnie Watson Coleman, D-NJ-12
- Thom Tillis, R-NC
- Shelley Moore Capito, R-WV

**Notable national news:**

Spending cuts hurt the non-military sectors too – from The Hill

In response to an article citing the damage of budget cuts to the defense sector, ASBMB’s Ben Corb writes in The Hill that federal budget cuts also damage federally funded non-military sectors, such as scientific research.
Top 10 medical research issues and trends to watch in 2015 – from Huffington Post

Faster Cures Executive Director Margaret Anderson lists some of the top issues that patient advocate groups are watching in the coming year.

NIH cancels children’s study after 10 years of work – from ScienceInsider

Science rarely makes a major appearance in the president’s annual State of the Union address. Tonight’s speech by President Barack Obama maintained that tradition—but he did take a few moments in the 60-minute address to stake out a strong defense of his administration’s policies to combat climate change, and to preview a new “precision medicine” initiative that aims to tap genetic and other information to improve treatments for human diseases.

**Upcoming events:**

Apply for the ASBMB science policy fellowship!

The ASBMB’s science policy fellowship offers recently graduated Ph.D.s exposure to a range of activities regarding science policy and congressional and government relations. Fellows work in the public affairs office of ASBMB’s headquarters, located just outside of Washington D.C. Deadline for applications is Feb. 11. Find out more here!