

September 24, 2020

The ASBMB endorses the STEM RESTART Act

The following is a statement from Benjamin Corb, public affairs director for the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology:

“The ASBMB strongly supports the STEM RESTART Act introduced by Sens. Jacky Rosen, D-Nev. And Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Miss., which aims to bridge the gap between women, who are underrepresented, and men employed in the technical fields by incentivizing small and midsize organizations and businesses looking for qualified talent to hire women in the STEM field by providing them with funding.

Considering that nearly [half of women scientists leave full-time science](#) after becoming parents and that [women’s careers have disproportionately suffered](#) as a result of the coronavirus pandemic compared with men, securing positions for women in the STEM workforce is more important than ever. This legislation would create midcareer internships (also referred to as “returnships”) to address the difficulties that former STEM employees face. Midcareer internships have been proved to be an [effective way to address](#) the underrepresentation of women in STEM.

The STEM RESTART Act would provide funding for organizations within in-demand STEM industries, ensure accountability to the federal government by requiring reports to Congress on the use of grant funds, and allow businesses and grantees to collaborate with other providers, such as universities and nonprofit organizations to provide the best internship experience.

Not only does this legislation address disparities in the STEM workforce, but it also addresses the [STEM workforce labor shortage](#). Talented and qualified women are often overlooked in the application process due to large gaps in employment, and they are an untapped resource for the American research enterprise.

Rosen and Hyde-Smith’s bill is an important first step to addressing the issue of gender imbalance within STEM fields that has only gotten worse since the coronavirus pandemic. We urge members of Congress to support this important legislation to bolster the American research enterprise.”