MAYOR
REX RICHARDSON

29

Date: May 5, 2026

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor Rex Richardson

Subject: Support for the Essential Healthcare Restoration Act for Los Angeles County (Measure ER)

RECOMMENDATION:

Request the City Council take an official position in support of Measure ER, the Essential Healthcare Restoration Act for Los Angeles County.

DISCUSSION:

Background

On June 2, 2026, Los Angeles County voters will consider Measure ER, the Essential Healthcare Restoration Act for Los Angeles County. Measure ER is a proposed temporary one-half cent (0.5%) countywide sales tax, lasting five years, intended to stabilize and protect critical healthcare services across the region.

The measure was placed on the ballot by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in response to significant federal cuts to Medi-Cal funding, which are projected to result in billions of dollars in lost healthcare resources across the LA County over the coming years.

If approved by voters, Measure ER is estimated to generate approximately $1 billion annually to help offset the devastating public health and community-level impacts of these substantial losses and sustain the County's healthcare safety net to continue serving the needs of the public.

What Measure ER Does

Measure ER is designed as a temporary, locally controlled investment to preserve essential healthcare services that residents across Los Angeles County depend on. The measure would:

- Help prevent closures of public hospitals, emergency rooms, and community health clinics

- Sustain access to primary care, mental health services, and reproductive healthcare
- Maintain disease surveillance, vaccination programs, and public health response systems
- Support the healthcare workforce, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other frontline providers
- Strengthen regional disaster preparedness and emergency response capacity

Without this funding, healthcare providers across the County anticipate significant and harmful service reductions, layoffs, and facility closures that would significantly impact access to care, particularly for seniors, low-income residents, families, and those who rely on Medi-Cal.

Measure ER includes meaningful accountability provisions including independent citizen oversight, annual audits, and public reporting to ensure transparency in how all funds are used.

Local Impact and Relevance to Long Beach

Long Beach is deeply integrated into the Los Angeles County healthcare system, with residents relying on a network of public hospitals, community clinics, and regional public health infrastructure.

Approximately 39 percent of LA County residents are enrolled in Medi-Cal, and projections indicate that more than one million individuals could lose coverage due to federal policy changes in the coming years. These impacts will be felt across all communities, including Long Beach, where access to affordable healthcare, emergency services, and public health programs remains a critical priority.

Recent federal funding reductions have already had measurable impacts on public health services in Long Beach. The City has documented the loss of federal funding streams that support essential programs, forcing difficult decisions about whether services can be sustained. Federal funding supports a wide range of local services including public health programs, housing initiatives, youth services, and infrastructure investments, and the City's General Fund cannot absorb the full cost of these losses if cuts continue.

In the healthcare and public health space specifically, funding cuts have already resulted in the elimination or scaling back of critical services. For example, the loss of approximately $1.3 million in federal funding led to the discontinuation of mobile HIV/STI testing, outreach, and prevention services, reducing access to care for vulnerable populations in Long Beach. Additionally, the loss of roughly $900,000 in annual federal nutrition funding forced the closure of the Healthy Active Long Beach program, which had served more than 30,000 residents each year with nutrition education and chronic disease prevention services. The Long Beach Health and Human Services Department,

one of only three city-run health departments in the state, has experienced a net loss of approximately $18 million in federal funding due to fiscal policy shifts at the national level. This has impacted 44 staff positions in the Health Department that the city is unable to replace with local funding, and the department is anticipating even greater funding impacts due to additional reductions in state-level funding and the rolling costs of healthcare services. These examples illustrate how federal funding reductions directly translate into fewer services, reduced access to care, and increased long-term health risks for Long Beach residents.

Reductions in healthcare capacity regionally would place additional strain on local emergency rooms, increase wait times, and reduce access to preventative and primary care, resulting in worse health outcomes and higher long-term costs. Measure ER provides an opportunity to protect the healthcare infrastructure that Long Beach residents rely on, while ensuring that funding raised locally remains within Los Angeles County to support local services.

The Opportunity

As the City of Long Beach continues to advance its goals around public health, equity, and community well-being, Measure ER represents a timely and necessary regional response to an emerging healthcare funding crisis.

This measure offers a temporary, accountable, and locally controlled solution to stabilize essential healthcare services during a period of significant uncertainty. By acting now, LA County and its diverse cities can help prevent disruptions to care, protect vulnerable populations, and maintain the capacity needed to respond to future public health emergencies.

Supporting Measure ER aligns with the City's longstanding commitment to protecting access to healthcare, strengthening regional partnerships, and investing in the health and safety of all residents.

Timing Considerations

Measure ER will be considered by Los Angeles County voters on June 2, 2026. As jurisdictions across the County take positions on the measure, timely action by the City Council will help inform regional discussions and demonstrate Long Beach's leadership on issues of public health and healthcare access.

Fiscal Impact

The recommendation for the City Council to take an official position in support of Measure ER supports the preservation of critical healthcare services and infrastructure across Los Angeles County, which directly benefits Long Beach residents. There is no significant fiscal impact associated with adopting this position. This recommendation has no staffing

impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with existing City Council priorities. There is no local job impact associated with this recommendation.

No Public Funds Shall Be Used for Campaign

No public funds shall be used in the campaign for or against Measure ER, the Essential Healthcare Restoration Act for Los Angeles County.

Suggested Action

Approve recommendation.

Respectfully submitted,



Mayor Rex Richardson