

# Facts on Measure AA

## PROTECT DESERT CARE



The Desert Regional Medical Center lease expires in 2027, risking disruptions to care at Desert Regional, loss of funding for healthcare services in the Coachella Valley, and the potential for new taxes for residents to cover the costs of operating the hospital.

Measure AA renews Desert Regional's lease, ensuring lifesaving care at Desert Regional is not disrupted, providing nearly \$650 million to the local government to continue programs expanding access to healthcare, and **guaranteeing continued professional operation** of the hospital — **at no cost to taxpayers.**

## Yes on AA Ensures Continued Professional Operation of Desert Regional Medical Center

- 27 years ago, the Desert Healthcare District, a local government agency, was responsible for operating Desert Regional Medical Center. The hospital was \$95 million in debt and on the verge of shutting down. If the lease is not renewed, the District will be forced to take over Desert Regional again.
- In 1997 a professional operator, Tenet Healthcare, signed a 30—year lease to operate Desert Regional, saving the hospital from closure. The operator paid off the District's debt, and invested hundreds of millions of dollars to upgrade Desert Regional — including establishing the only level 1 trauma center in the area.
- The District voted to put Measure AA on the ballot to ensure **continued access to care** and professional operation of Desert Regional Medical Center.

*Desert Healthcare District, Our Story, July 2024*  
*Desert Sun, February 22, 1997*

## Yes on AA Saves Taxpayers from Paying Millions to Keep the Hospital Operational

- Start-up costs for the District to run the hospital could exceed \$200 million dollars — more than triple their operating budget — and could force the District to seek new taxes to cover the cost.
- CA law mandates all hospitals complete earthquake safety upgrades in 2030. These required renovations are estimated to cost over \$220 million at Desert Regional — another cost the District can't afford.
- Measure AA ensures **the hospital operator, not the taxpayers, pay for operating Desert Regional Medical Center**, and any required renovations and upgrades to the hospital.

*Gibbins Advisors Desert Healthcare District Report May 2024*





## Yes on AA Provides Ongoing Funding for Vital Community Programs

- To date, funds from the existing lease have provided almost **\$100 million to community organizations** and nonprofits that support important healthcare services throughout the Valley.
- Measure AA **provides an additional nearly \$650 million to the District** in lease payments to continue to expand their work improving local healthcare in our communities.
- Programs to recruit new physicians to the Coachella Valley are helping **address our shortage of 240 doctors**. Measure AA protects these programs, and brings more doctors and nurses to the Valley.

*Desert Healthcare District, Historic Grants, May 2020  
Tenet-Desert Lease-Purchase Agreement, 2024*

## Yes on AA Protects Coachella Valley Patients and Continues Lifesaving Care at Desert Regional

- Desert Regional Medical Center **treats over 238,000 patients a year**. Measure AA protects patients, guaranteeing current capacity is maintained.
- **18% of Coachella Valley residents live in poverty** with limited access to healthcare. Desert Regional provides the most hospital care to Medi-Cal patients in the Coachella Valley.
- Since taking over operations at the hospital, Tenet has invested **\$339 million to improve facilities and lifesaving services** at Desert Regional Medical Center, establishing:
  - The District's only Level 1 Trauma Center — the highest designation for a trauma center that treats the most severe cases.
  - The first recipient of the Joint Commission Advanced Certification in Perinatal Care in the Inland Empire.
  - The first Comprehensive Community Cancer Program in the area accredited by the Commission on Cancer, meeting all 34 quality care standards.
  - The first comprehensive stroke center in Riverside County, receiving the Gold Plus Stroke Achievement Award from the American Heart Association's Get With the Guidelines program.
  - The only hospital in the District with a 100 rating in the Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equality Index.

*Tenet-Desert Lease-Purchase Agreement, 2024  
City-Data.com, Coachella Valley Poverty Levels, 2024*

Local nurses, doctors and patients support **Yes on AA**, because it protects lifesaving care and ensures upgrades and renovations are made to the Desert Regional Medical Center without disruptions — and **at no cost to taxpayers**.

Ad paid for by Yes on AA: Protect Lifesaving Care at Desert Regional Medical Center.  
A Coachella Valley Coalition of Doctors, Nurses, Patients, and Community Groups.  
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