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Measure H: A Public Health and Community Workforce Perspective

A neutral, evidence-based review of how proposed school and career-training investments relate to Tehama County's identified health needs

Purpose. This brief summarizes the public-health relevance of Measure H. It does not tell readers how to vote. It also does not guarantee that the measure would increase the number of local healthcare providers. Tehama County Health Services Agency does not have an official position on Measure H, and this brief should not be considered an endorsement of the merits of Measure H. This narrative explains the documented need and the potential pathway from career education to a stronger local workforce. It also describes the additional actions needed for that pathway to succeed.

Key Takeaway

Tehama County has identified **access to healthcare** as a community health priority. The county's 2023 Community Health Assessment (CHA) was updated in February 2025. It describes the conditions that shape local health and informed the county's priority-setting. The subsequent Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) names healthcare access as one of three priority areas. The other two are mental health and substance use, and access to food. Measure H proposes training facilities for nursing, emergency medical services, and firefighting. These facilities could support one part of the response to healthcare access needs. They could help prepare more local residents to continue into health and emergency-response education and careers.

The county's assessment and improvement-planning work present consistent local evidence. Residents report provider shortages and turnover. They also report long waits for specialty and mental-health care. Other concerns include travel outside the county for services, transportation barriers, and limited local access to postsecondary

education. Community members have also called for more healthcare workers. They have identified a need for career ladders from certified nursing assistant to registered nurse. They have also requested short-term vocational training and more allied-health and community-health workers. The CHIP turns that community input into a countywide priority. Its goal is to improve healthcare access through action that is practical, sustainable, and collaborative.

What Measure H Would Fund

According to Red Bluff Joint Union High School District materials, Measure H is a proposed \$19 million local education bond. It is on the November 2026 ballot. The district states that the proceeds would support career-training facilities. The proposed pathways include emergency medical services, firefighting, and nursing. The measure would also address school health and safety needs. These include aging heating and air-conditioning systems, drinking-water systems, accessibility, plumbing, electrical systems, bathrooms, and campus safety.

The district reports an estimated tax of \$19 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. Assessed value is different from market value. The district states that bond proceeds would be restricted to district school projects. The proceeds could not be used for administrator salaries. The measure would require annual independent audits, review by a citizens' oversight committee, and public disclosure of spending. District materials also describe possible state matching funds. If the Red Bluff community approves Measure H, the district could qualify for up to \$16 million as its share of those funds. Qualification does not guarantee an award. The amount and availability of any match would remain subject to state eligibility requirements, funding decisions, and the official ballot materials.

How Measure H Could Contribute

1. Create an earlier entry point into health careers

Local career and technical education can introduce students to nursing, emergency medical services, and related occupations before they leave high school. Hands-on instruction can help students test their career interests and build foundational skills.

Recognized coursework, dual enrollment, and work-based learning can also help students move into further education or entry-level employment. A local starting point matters in a rural county.

2. Grow a workforce with local ties

A local program could enlarge the pool of Tehama County students who are prepared to pursue healthcare and emergency-response careers that may require licenses, certificates, or degrees. Students educated near home may already understand the county's geography and transportation limits. They may also be familiar with local culture and community institutions. Those ties can be useful to local employers and patients. In this way, the measure could strengthen the beginning of a longer workforce development ecosystem.

3. Support the partnerships the CHIP calls for

The CHIP is a collaborative and stakeholder-driven process. Career facilities can provide a practical setting for coordination among schools, healthcare employers, emergency responders, colleges, workforce agencies, and community organizations. These partners could coordinate instruction and mentoring. They could also support dual enrollment, clinical or field experience, and transitions into jobs. This partnership model fits the CHIP's emphasis on shared ownership. It also supports sustainable strategies and stronger community capacity.

4. Improve school conditions that affect health and learning

Measure H also identifies several school facility needs. These include heating and air-conditioning, drinking-water systems, accessibility, plumbing, electrical systems, bathrooms, and campus safety. These are public-health concerns as well as facility concerns. Reliable ventilation, safe water, accessible buildings, and functioning sanitation promote health, support attendance and readiness to learn, and help provide a safe environment for students and staff.

Evidence Behind These Connections

Healthy indoor air and continuity of learning

Indoor air: Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) identifies ventilation as an important strategy for preventing infections in schools. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reports that heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) and maintenance problems can trigger asthma and allergy symptoms. These problems can also increase absenteeism and reduce academic performance.

Safe drinking water as a child-health protection

Drinking water: The California State Water Resources Control Board identifies lead in school drinking water as a continuing public-health concern. Children are especially vulnerable. The board notes that older fixtures and solder can contribute lead. This finding supports treating water-system and plumbing work as preventive infrastructure. It should be noted that Red Bluff High School receives its tap water from the municipal system managed by the City of Red Bluff Public Works Department. According to the California State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Drinking Water, the city's water infrastructure currently meets all state and federal safety guidelines. It has zero active health-based water quality violations.

Rural career pathways and local workforce capacity

Rural pathways: The U.S. Department of Education reports that rural career pathways can connect several stages of workforce preparation. These stages include student interest, high-school coursework, postsecondary education, credentials, and employment. Employment may include work in a student's home region. The department also notes barriers associated with geographic isolation. This evidence supports locally available pathways. Effective pathways should also include advising, dual enrollment, transportation assistance, work-based learning, and agreements with employers and colleges.

Alignment with California health-care education goals and labor demand

The California Department of Education describes Health Careers Education as a pathway from school to employment or postsecondary education. Such pathways can help meet demand in the healthcare industry. Nationally, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that healthcare occupations will grow much faster than average from 2025 to 2035. It projects about 1.9 million openings each year due to growth and replacement needs.

What Would Be Needed to Further Affect Provider Shortages

Facilities are an enabling investment, not a complete workforce strategy. A meaningful contribution to local provider capacity would require:

- qualified instructors and stable program operating funds;
- dual-enrollment and articulated pathways to certificates, community colleges, and four-year programs;
- clinical placements, internships, mentoring, and work-based learning with local providers and first responders;
- student support for transportation, housing, fees, equipment, language access, and other participation barriers;
- local hiring, apprenticeship, tuition-support, and retention strategies; and
- public reporting on enrollment, completion, credentials, continued education, job placement, and local employment.

The county's plans reinforce the importance of this long-term approach. Tehama County has an estimated 65,500 residents. The CHIP cites a statewide figure that 15 percent of California residents are under age 18. More than 21 percent of residents are older than age 65. A sizable school-age population creates an opportunity to build a future workforce. At the same time, the older population increases the importance of reliable access to care. Measure H could support training infrastructure at the front of that workforce pipeline. However, later education and licensing would still be necessary. Recruitment and retention would also determine whether the pipeline ultimately adds providers in Tehama County.

Public Health Conclusion

From a public-health perspective, Measure H aligns with needs documented in Tehama County's Community Health Assessment, Community Context Assessment, and Community Health Improvement Plan. Its strongest potential connection to the provider shortage is a stronger local starting point rather than an immediate increase in clinicians. More students could gain exposure to health careers. Training could be better equipped. Partnerships among schools, employers, and colleges could also become stronger. If the facilities are paired with complete education pathways and retention strategies, they could help expand the future pool of locally connected healthcare and emergency-response workers. Measure H is one possible contribution to that work. It would not replace needed broader action on advanced professional training, recruitment, housing, transportation, broadband, affordability, language access, or behavioral-health capacity.