

YOUR VIEW

Imagine no hospital

Editor,

In 1947, the voters chose to build our current hospital which opened in 1951. The current hospital has served this county for 71 years. To build a new hospital the voters need to pass Measure O which means an increase to the current sales tax by 1 percent.

According to Google, the current sales tax in Merced is 8.25 percent while the sales tax in Mariposa is 7.75 percent. Most grocery store items (uncooked food) are not taxed. If you purchase a \$100 weed eater from a Mariposa store, there is a sales tax of 7.75 percent or \$7.75. Remember the one-half cent sales tax previously voted on goes away after next year which means the sales tax will only be 7.25 percent, making the tax on that \$100 purchase \$7.25.

If Measure O passes and after the previous tax goes away, a purchase of \$100 will be taxed 8.25 percent or \$8.25. One penny on every taxable dollar spent. If you go to Merced and purchase that same \$100 weed eater, you will be taxed 8.25 percent or \$8.25, the exact same amount! Save that gas and wear and tear on your vehicle and shop in Mariposa.

If the hospital measure doesn't pass, we won't have a hospital after the year 2030. So, if a person has an episode needing medical attention and calls 911, CAL FIRE will respond and do what they can until the ambulance arrives to transport you to the nearest facility.

The time it takes an ambulance to arrive varies and depends on availability. If an ambulance is taking a patient to Merced from Midpines, it's a 92 mile round trip, Bootjack to Merced is an 88 mile round trip and Catheys Valley to Merced is a 54 mile round trip, not to mention the time it takes to unload and check in the patient. If the ambulance is busy traveling to and from Merced, or elsewhere, and there isn't an available ambulance, a person will need to wait. While CAL FIRE is great, they don't transport patients, not even to meet a helicopter for a flight.

The current hospital offers many services. They can quickly assess the patient and decide if they can treat the person or need to move that patient to a larger facility. Imagine if that larger facility were in Mariposa. The need to transport a patient out of town would decrease and we would have those great services right here in our county. Imagine the services we could take advantage of right here rather than traveling to other facilities.

John C. Fremont Hospital has served my and other families well over the years. Imagine if they weren't there when we needed them. Imagine having a medical event and waiting for the ambulance to return from Merced so they could take you to Merced. Imagine the 250 or so employees of JCF suddenly needing to relocate because they have no job.

One argument is no new taxes. Consider that generations before us funded our current hospital, it's our turn to fund it for future generations. Please vote yes on Measure O.

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