

**California Secretary of State
Voter's Choice Task Force**

Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 13, 2026 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

1. Welcome, Call to Order: 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Task Force Members Present: Chair Petrina Branch, Chair Donna Linder, Carrie Cornwell, Matt Moreles, Gabriel Taylor, Art Tinoco, Deanna Kitamura, Dean Logan, Melvin E. Levey.

Absent: Dora Rose, Bob Page, Camila Chavez, Leslie Hernandez, Ellen Nash, Jesse Salinas, Ethan Jones, Brittany Stonesifer, Evelyn Mendez.

Declaration of Quorum

SOS Briana Ricketts-Beck declared a quorum was reached.

2. Comments: General Public Items Not on the Agenda
Chair Petrina Branch invited public comments. The following comments were made: No public comments.
3. Discussion and Possible Action: Task Force Meeting Minutes of July 30, 2026
Recommendation for Action: Staff recommend the Task Force adopt the minutes of the meeting of July 30, 2026.

In a motion by Deanna Kitamura, seconded by Matt Moreles, and carried on a 7-0 vote, the meeting minutes from July 30, 2026 were approved, with the following corrections:

- Carrie Cornwell was present during the July 30, 2026 meeting
- Correct the name spelling of Gabriel Taylor (not Gabrielle)

AYES: Chair Petrina Branch, Chair Donna Linder, Melvin E. Levey, Matt Moreles, Gabriel Taylor, Art Tinoco, Deanna Kitamura

ABSTAIN: Dean Logan

ABSENT for vote: Dora Rose, Bob Page, Camila Chavez, Leslie Hernandez, Ellen Nash, Jesse Salinas, Brittany Stonesifer, Evelyn Mendez

4. CSUS Report Update
 - SOS Josh Robinson noted that the data are not yet available but will be shared with the Task Force once it is.

5. Subcommittee Assignments (for 2026 Primary Election report)

- Chair Petrina Branch explained that there is still a need for some members to join some of the subcommittees:
 - Purpose & History of VCA/introduction -- Art Tinoco, Leslie Hernandez.
 - Deanna Kitamura already started to update the text of this section from the previous report and will share with Art and Leslie.
 - Ballot rejection rate/USPS changes – Melvin Levey, Ellen Nash.
 - Ballot processing speed – Bob Page.
 - Dean Logan volunteered to join Bob Page on this subcommittee
 - Review of VoteCal data – Donna Linder, Matt Moreles.
 - Review of the reports from the universities
 - Melvin Levey volunteered to support Gabriel Taylor on this committee if no one else can be found.
 - Conclusion – Petrina Branch.
- With no additional volunteers, Chair Petrina Branch asked the committee what the next steps ought to be.
 - SOS Josh Robinson suggested SOS can send the survey around again.
 - Dean Logan asked clarification: is there a reason why accessibility is not included this time? And are USPS changes/ballot processing speed out of scope for this report?
 - Matt Moreles noted that while the accessibility piece wasn't discussed last time, there was discussion around including the two new sections (refer to notes from last meeting).
 - Gabriel Taylor said that accessibility is a constant point of discussion in Disability Rights California (DRC); how to best collect accurate data. Perhaps that can be discussed here, too.
 - Deanna Kitamura reminded the Task Force that the accessibility section of the Special 2025 Election report was written in a general way, so perhaps it can be adopted wholesale for this report as well. Dean Logan agrees, and also noted that accessibility can also be touched on through the analysis of university data.
 - Deanna volunteered to update the accessibility section of the previous report so it can be used in this report.

6. Future Agenda Items

- Chair Petrina Branch invited future agenda items from the Task Force.
- Deanna Kitamura noted that there is a 9-month requirement for election budgets to be reported, but those are often not seen. She suggests perhaps SOS can provide some guidance, or might there be something that can be helpful for the counties?
 - SOS Josh Robinson noted that the agency is currently working on language to share with the counties, as that deadline is coming up in a few weeks.
- Public comment was invited.
 - Rhonda Provost thanked Matt Moreles, Melvin Levey, and Dora Rose from last month for their work and discussion related to the UCLA report. Rhonda noted that from her reading of the UCLA report, she is seeing that the “More Days, More Ways to vote” promised by the VCA model is not reflected in the data. There might be other reasons behind why voters are not participating at expected levels, and the Task Force might want to consider exploring that.
 - Dean Logan noted in the chat: “Reports from the Center for the Inclusive Democracy reflect, at least in some respects, a different perspective on VCA impact on participation.”

7. Adjournment

Chair Petrina Branch adjourned the meeting at 2:26 p.m.