

Briefing Materials

Prepared for the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Meeting on May 14 & 15, 2025

The California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force (Task Force) was established in the Budget Act of 2022 ([AB 179](#)) to develop recommendations to equitably increase access to agricultural land for food production and traditional tribal agricultural uses. The Task Force consists of a regionally diverse group of individuals representing socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, land trusts, agricultural finance and real estate, and the State of California.

This briefing packet was developed by California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) staff and includes the following components.

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Strategic Growth Council Staff Report

To California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force Members, May 14 & 15, 2025

Announcements & Updates

Interagency review process

The following state agencies have appointed individuals to assist with interagency review of the Task Force's Draft Report:

- California Department of Conservation (DOC)
- California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)
- California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA)
- Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz)

Staff anticipate sharing the Draft Report with interagency reviewers in June 2025. Reviewers' feedback will be consolidated, summarized, and shared with Task Force members for their consideration at the August 2025 meeting.

Updated Task Force budget table

Current as of March 31, 2025.

Category	FY 22-23 & 23-24 expenditures	FY 24-25 expenditures thru 04/2025	Total budgeted	Total obligated	Total remaining
Personnel (SGC staff)	\$157,875	\$297,386	\$1,00,760	\$1,100,760	\$0
Operating expenses (travel, facilitator, language access, etc.)	\$100,429	\$150,257	\$884,240	\$302,021	\$331,533
Research and technical assistance	\$0	\$0	\$270,000	\$0	\$270,000
Local assistance (e.g., grants, pilot projects, research)	\$0	\$0	\$1,000,000	\$0	\$1,000,000
Total	\$258,304	\$447,643	\$3,255,000	\$1,402,781	\$1,601,503

Community Engagement Session Reports

Below are brief summaries of recent community engagement sessions, listed in chronological order. More extensive syntheses and additional data from the sessions are available in [Google Drive](#).

EcoFarm Conference Listening Session

Date: January 23, 2025

Task Force Representatives: Chair Hawkins and Member Nakahara

Staff Support: Tessa Salzman, SGC

Total Attendance: Approximately 30 people

Summary author: Tessa Salzman

Presenters provided an overview of the Task Force and outreach to date. The participants then divided into three smaller groups to discuss general challenges, potential solutions, and resources needed related to equitable land access. The participants highlighted a range of persistent barriers for small-scale and historically disadvantaged farmers. Attendees expressed frustration with outdated, inaccessible, and slow-moving USDA programs including Farm Services Agency loans, zoning restrictions, parcel sizes that are either too small or too large, and funding that favors large-scale operations. There was concern about land being concentrated in the hands of large corporations and absentee owners, along with difficulties around lease terms, insurance liabilities, and the exclusion of undocumented or non-English-speaking farmers from important programs. Many participants also emphasized how one-size-fits-all policies and a lack of culturally appropriate outreach limit access and reduce trust, particularly in communities who have been impacted by land dispossession and discrimination.

In terms of solutions, participants called for a shift toward collective and community-based land management structures such as land trusts, incubators, and cooperative models. There was strong support for creating new zoning and legal frameworks that support alternative land ownership structures, as well as using tax incentives, eminent domain, and statewide planning to limit land speculation and promote productive use of land for community agriculture. Additional proposals included tailored educational efforts (both for landowners and the public), culturally competent technical assistance, reforms to loan and grant programs, and ensuring

undocumented farmers are eligible for these resources. Some attendees also proposed adding ancestral land recognition to the land title so when land is sold, the buyer must reflect on who originally stewarded the land.

Coachella Valley Listening Session: Condensed Synthesis Summary

Date: February 11, 2025

Participants: Migrant Farmworkers, Tenant Farmers, Small Farmers, and Huerto Operators

Partner Organizations: Líderes Campesinas & Pueblo Unido CDC

Executive Summary

This report synthesizes findings from listening sessions with various agricultural stakeholders in Coachella Valley, revealing critical challenges faced by small-scale producers in accessing markets, navigating regulations, managing climate risks, and securing adequate infrastructure. We identify 10 critical themes, community-proposed solutions, and potential state actions which the task force may consider from the session.

Key Insights

- **Market Access Over Land Access:** Tenant farmers prioritized better market access over land ownership due to additional water & property tax costs. Wholesalers significantly undercut buying prices for small producers and limited distribution channels force reliance on unfair wholesaler pricing.
- **Land Tenure Insecurity:** However, other tenant farmers also identified issues with rental arrangements and how they create challenges with landlords, along with limit access to government assistance.
- **Infrastructure Barriers:** Restrictive zoning prevents building necessary infrastructure like cold storage, reinforcing reliance on non-producer facilities and preventing ownership of value-adding processes for disadvantaged farmers.
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Small & tenant farmers lack adequate insurance coverage against increasing climate risks.
- **Limited Support for Home Gardens:** “Huerto” projects need more funding, technical assistance to scale/commercialize, and regulatory exemptions against mandatory cutting for pests.
- **Educational Limitations:** K-12 education fails to showcase diverse career pathways in agriculture, especially towards kids of farm workers.
- **Financial & Regulatory Complexity:** Small operators struggle with complex regulations and a lack of access to favorable loans to build a resilient farm business.

Synthesis of Key Themes

1. Local Market Development & Fair Pricing

Agricultural producers need publicly funded, local food hubs. Tenant farmer participants prioritized market access over land ownership due to additional water and property tax costs

jeopardizing their business viability. This fear loomed with discussions of Los Angeles wholesalers undercutting small/tenant producers, forcing adaptation to more profitable crops rather than cultural preferences. Communities identify farmers' markets with reduced barriers to entry and mechanisms for price transparency to reduce reliance on predatory intermediaries.

2. Zoning & Infrastructure Support

Restrictive regulations prevent the development of basic processing facilities and independent value-adding infrastructure. For example, participants cannot build necessary cold storage due to zoning regulations. Government grant programs for shared infrastructure are needed, along with streamlined permitting processes and technical assistance through county-level service centers.

3. Climate Resilience & Risk Management

Participants report devastating crop losses without adequate insurance. Small and tenant farmers receive minimal-to-no support compared to large landowners. State-subsidized insurance products for tenant farmers and a publicly-administered climate disaster fund are urgently requested in the face of rising climate risks.

4. Huerto Development Support

Home gardens (*huertos*) are vital community resources. Participants need funding and technical improvements to commercialize these operations and fund collective infrastructure such as a community (plant) nursery. Regulatory pathways for certification and protection from mandatory cutting of *huertos* due to pest regulations are essential.

5. Financial & Business Resources

Participants struggle to access appropriate financing and business guidance. State-administered loan programs, business assistance, and legal aid for agricultural regulations are requested to address these barriers. Centralized resource centers would help operations identify and access existing support programs.

6. Educational Pipeline & Workforce Development

Family-based knowledge transfer currently dominates agricultural training. Participants request agricultural science & entrepreneurship in K-12 curricula and education that presents agriculture to their children as a profession more than manual labor. Specialized agricultural academies, scholarship programs, and mentorship networks would enhance awareness of diverse career trajectories.

7. Regulatory Navigation & Simplification

Complex requirements overwhelm small producers. Participants need simplified regulatory pathways, multilingual materials, and continuous outreach when policies change. Coordinated inspections across agencies would reduce administrative burden, while pest management regulations should offer appropriate flexibility for small-scale operations such as *huertos*.

8. Water Access & Affordability

Water costs fundamentally shape agricultural viability. Participants report little perceived difference between renting and owning due to high water costs. State-supported community water systems with democratic governance structures and legal protection of community water rights are requested. Agreement-building services are also requested to facilitate effective cooperative governance of water.

9. Distribution Network Development

Limited market access is the primary barrier to growth. Participants cannot connect with vendors offering fair prices. State-supported cooperative distribution networks and transportation infrastructure were requested to potentially address these gaps, along with developing local food hubs to reduce the reliance on external intermediaries as voiced in the “local market development” section.

10. Implementation & Governance

Participants describe communication barriers with agencies and programs designed for “corporate agriculture” rather than small-scale producers. Regular listening sessions with transparent reporting and multilingual resources are essential for meaningful engagement. The lack of reports to communities post-listening sessions was also a massive frustration expressed.

Common Themes & Integrated Community-Proposed Solutions

Common Concerns Across Groups

1. **Market Access & Fair Pricing:** Unfair pricing from intermediaries and preferences for local farmers’ markets.
2. **Insurance & Climate Vulnerability:** Inadequate insurance options amid escalating climate risks.
3. **Financial & Regulatory Complexity:** Frustration navigating regulations not designed for small operations, along with a lack of favorable loans to access.
4. **Water Affordability:** Fundamental economic constraint impacting land tenure decisions.
5. **Educational Improvement:** Desire for education showcasing diverse agricultural career pathways.

Community-led Integrated Solutions

1. **Tiered Support Systems:** Differentiated state programs for various stages from home gardens to large commercial operations.
2. **Cooperative Models with Clear Governance:** Structures addressing past challenges through transparent agreement-building processes.
3. **Comprehensive Educational Strategy:** Programs honoring traditional knowledge while building pathways to technical roles.
4. **Integrated Regulatory Navigation:** Centralized assistance providing personalized guidance through regulatory processes.

5. **Participatory Governance:** Institutionalized community participation with regular forums and transparent reporting.

Summary of Participant-Proposed State Actions

1. **Publicly-Funded Local Food Hubs:** State government establishing local food hubs addressing market access challenges, creating farmers' markets with reduced barriers to entry and implementing price transparency mechanisms.
2. **Rural Zoning Code Reform:** Reforming county-level rural zoning codes to allow infrastructure development, enabling small farmers to build necessary cold storage and processing facilities through streamlined permitting processes.
3. **Public Disaster Insurance Expansion:** Mandating expanded disaster insurance accessibility for small and tenant farmers through state-subsidized products addressing current inequities and establishing publicly-administered climate disaster funds.
4. **State-Funded Huerto Development Program:** Supporting home gardens with funding and technical assistance, creating regulatory pathways for commercial certification and protecting gardens from mandatory cutting due to pest regulations.
5. **Public Agricultural Loan Programs:** Implementing loan programs designed specifically for small farmers through state-chartered credit institutions with sector knowledge, while providing business technical assistance for operations without management staff.
6. **K-12 Agricultural Curriculum Reform:** Integrating agricultural science & entrepreneurship into educational programs, teaching agronomy, engineering, and business aspects while creating scholarship programs targeting children of agricultural workers.
7. **Publicly-Staffed Navigator Program:** Creating navigator programs to help with regulatory complexity through multilingual materials and coordinated inspections across agencies.
8. **Community Water Systems Support:** Establishing publicly-supported community water systems with democratic governance structures and legal protection for community water rights. This should be accompanied by appropriate agreement-building services.
9. **Cooperative Distribution Networks:** Supporting publicly-backed cooperative distribution networks, developing transportation infrastructure connecting small producers to markets through collective marketing channels.

Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) Small Farms Conference

Date: February 23, 2025

Task Force Representatives: Members Payán and Zhou

Staff Support: Camille Frazier, SGC

Total Attendance: Approximately 45, all virtual; about 8–12 responses to each survey question

Summary author: Camille Frazier

Presenters selected and shared four goals from the February 2025 draft of the report. The goals were chosen based on what would likely resonate with those attending a conference focused on small farmers. The selected goals were: 1) Support adequate housing and infrastructure on agricultural land, 2) Facilitate equitable transition of private lands, 3) leverage public lands, and 4) improve equitable access to resources.

The presenters began with a brief overview of the Task Force, followed by slides detailing the overarching goal and relevant recommendations. Presenters then paused for attendees to complete the survey for each slide, which asked: What resonates with you? What concerns you? What is missing?

A complete list of poll responses are available in Google Drive. Generally, attendees found that the goals and strategies resonated with them. Their primary concerns were related to: 1) the barriers or challenges that might make it difficult to achieve the goals and 2) ensuring that the specific actions were nuanced and thoughtful so that they would not lead to further inequities. For example, in relation to housing, most attendees agreed that housing on agricultural land is necessary but cautioned that it needed to be dignified and affordable and done in such a way to prevent losing agricultural land for residential development. In addition, several participants noted that it was unclear who would be responsible for the action and how it would be funded.

Summary of Revisions: March – May 2025

Prepared by SGC staff for the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

May 2, 2025

Revisions Process

On March 27, 2025, members of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force (Task Force) directed staff to revise the March draft for further discussion in May. For a full list of recommended revisions shared in the meeting, please see the Draft Meeting Summary.

Staff consolidated feedback provided in the March meeting with additional notes from recent subcommittee meetings and comments sent by individual Task Force members. Staff tracked these comments in a detailed feedback tracker that is available for review by Task Force members upon request.

Below is a summary of key revisions that are incorporated into the May draft. Task Force members wishing to review changes within the draft can request from staff a document identifying all revisions.

Summary of Key Revisions

Renaming and Reorganizing Goals

In response to Task Force feedback, staff made the following changes to the report's higher-level goals:

- Split the first goal into two separate goals:
 - Return ancestral lands to California Tribal Nations (p. 10), and
 - Recognize and remove barriers to sovereignty of California Tribal Nations (p. 11).
- Made the goal "Advance fair and just landowner-tenant relationships" a strategy under a new goal: "Advance and support secure land tenure" (p. 15).
- Changed the goal "Address inequitable impacts of policies and regulations" to "Reform policies and regulations to address uneven impacts" (p. 16)
- Changed the goal "Leverage public lands for agriculture" to "Evaluate and leverage suitable public lands for agriculture" (p. 19).

Additions

In response to Task Force members' feedback, Staff made the following additions to the report:

- A recommendation to establish and fund a Tribal State Lands Committee (p. 11).
- A paragraph stating the value of prime farmland and agricultural soil (p. 12).
- A recommendation to acquire and fund the acquisition of Prime Farmland for agricultural conservation (p. 12).
- A strategy to establish and fund a Land Observatory (p. 15).
- A strategy to establish a research and technical assistance department within the California State Land Commission (p. 15).
- A recommendation to extend maximum lease terms to 100 years (p. 16).
- A strategy to increase technical assistance to priority producers and land stewards to ensure long-term land tenure (p. 16).
- Under the renamed goal "Reform policies and regulations to address uneven impacts" (p. 16), added strategies for the following:
 - Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program
 - Food Safety Modernization Act
 - California Labor Policies and Regulations
- Under the renamed goal "Evaluate and leverage suitable public lands for agriculture" (p. 19), added a strategy for Local government-owned land.

Lastly, staff also changed the definition of the term "land tenure" to include long-term economic considerations and the different types of land tenure.

Legislative Updates

2025 bills are continuing to work their way through the first house of the legislature. According to the [California State Senate legislative calendar](#), June 6 is the last day for each house to pass bills originally introduced in that house.

[AB 524 \(Wilson\)](#)

Would create Farmland Access and Conservation for Thriving Communities Program, administered by the Department of Conservation (DOC). DOC will provide financial assistance to qualified entities to acquire agricultural lands to transfer or provide long-term leases to qualified farmer participants.

DOC may contract with nonprofits to administer program.

Task Force References:

10104. The department, in collaboration with the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force, shall establish the Farmland Access and Conservation for Thriving Communities Program in the department to provide financial and technical assistance to support agricultural land acquisition and protection.

10108. (e) Provide reasonable per diem and resources to members of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force to ensure proper oversight over the development of the program.

10114. (b) The department consults with the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force to select each nonprofit organization to administer the program.

Status: Passed Assembly Agriculture Committee (8-0-0) and moved to Appropriations

[Proposition 4 – Climate Bond](#)

Authorizes \$10 billion in general obligation bonds to fund projects aimed at enhancing climate resilience, including \$30 million to improve land access and tenure for socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, tribal producers, and beginning farmers and ranchers.

Status: Approved by voters in 2024.

[SB 462 \(Cortese\)](#)

Creates the Farmland Conservancy Program Funding Account within the California Farmland Conservancy Program Fund. Would require \$20 million be annually

appropriated to the Account for agricultural conservation easements on agricultural land.

Status: Passed Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee. Referred to Senate Committee on Appropriations, placed on suspense file.*

[AB 1485 \(Macedo\)](#)

As amended, would exempt tribal land return transactions for cultural, educational, recreational, or conservation uses from the documentary transfer tax, and exempt land held by federally recognized tribes for conservation purposes from property tax until 2031.

Status: Amended and re-referred to the Assembly Committee on Revenue and Taxation.

As explained in an [April newsletter](#) by Lynn La of CalMatters, bills estimated to cost at least \$50,000 are placed on the suspense file. In May, the appropriations committees may take bills off of “suspense” to allow them to advance through the legislative process, or the committees can keep bills on “suspense,” “...essentially killing those measures for the session.

ACTION: Draft and submit a position letter on AB 524

Possible Action

Submit a position letter to the relevant committee(s) regarding Assembly Bill (AB) 524.

Background and Next Steps

On March 27, 2025, the Task Force established the AB 524 Subcommittee. In the Subcommittee's meeting on April 18, the members drafted a supportive position letter (see below).

The letter was submitted to the Assembly Committee on Agriculture by member James Nakahara on behalf of the Subcommittee on April 22.

During the Subcommittee's April 18 meeting, members requested that an agenda item be added to the Task Force's May 14-15 meeting for Task Force members to consider whether they would like to draft and submit a position letter on behalf of the full Task Force.

Task Force Recommendation

Should the Task Force decide to draft and submit a position letter, the following motion language is suggested:

"I move that the Task Force draft and submit a position letter regarding AB 524."

AB 524 Subcommittee's Position Letter

Note: This language was submitted by Member Nakahara to the Assembly Committee on Agriculture on April 22, 2025 via the California Legislature Advocates Portal.

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Esmerelda Z. Soria
California State Assembly Committee on Agriculture
1020 N Street, Room 362
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 524 (Wilson) Farmland Access and Conservation for Thriving Communities Act

Dear Assemblymember Soria:

As members of the AB 524 Subcommittee of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force, we write to share our **support** for AB 524 (Wilson) Farmland Access and Conservation for Thriving Communities Act. We thank Assemblymember Wilson and the Community Alliance with Family Farmers for authoring and sponsoring this bill, which would provide much-needed land access support for small-scale, beginning, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

We write as members of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force (Task Force), a 13-member, independent, public body administered by the California Strategic Growth Council that was established in the Budget Act of 2022 (AB-179) to develop recommendations for the Governor and Legislature about how to equitably increase access to land for food production and traditional tribal agricultural uses. Since October 2023, we have been hosting quarterly meetings across California to learn about diverse producers and land stewards' challenges with land access and pathways toward fair and secure land tenure for all of California's producers and land stewards. Please visit the program's webpage to learn more about the Task Force and its members:

<https://www.sgc.ca.gov/initiatives/alei/>.

We urge you to vote in favor of AB 524. This is the first tangible representation of the work that the Task Force is doing, and we are excited to see the issue of equitable land access moved forward. We understand that the bill as written calls

for the involvement of the Task Force, and we look forward to exploring ways the Task Force can support the Department of Conservation in developing the proposed program. As we continue to refine our report of recommendations, we are excited by the synergy between this bill and the Task Force's processes and outcomes. This bill is an opportunity to engage in an iterative process of program design that builds from the Task Force's years of work engaging with communities and developing effective policy recommendations to advance equitable and secure agricultural land access in California.

Thank you for all that you do for California's agricultural producers and land stewards.

Sincerely,

James Nakahara on behalf of the AB 524 Subcommittee of the California Agricultural Land Equity Task Force

Subcommittee Members:

Irene de Barraicua

Nathaniel Brown

Lawrence Harlan

James Nakahara

Doria Robinson

Liya Schwartzman

Qi Zhou

Staff Proposal for Close-Out Period and Final Work Products

The Task Force is mandated to submit its recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by January 1, 2026. The enabling statute (AB 178 Budget Act of 2022) does not specify an end date for the Task Force, but the budget allocation is set to end in June 2026.

Following the submission of its report, the Task Force has requested that staff share the completed report with those who were engaged with the Task Force at different points in its process.

Additional time and resources are required to ensure that the Task Force's work can be made accessible to a wider audience. Staff propose the following activities to meet this goal within existing time and resource constraints.

Timeline

Date/Period	Action/Outcome
December 11, 2025	Final ALETF meeting to approve and celebrate final report
December 18, 2025	Staff submit report as specified in statute and launch updated program website
January – May 2026	Staff begin distributing the report to partners and past participants and develop additional materials as specified below
May – June 2026	Staff complete distribution of report and additional materials

Final Work Products

Staff propose that the following materials be produced as part of the Task Force's contributions to the effort for fair and secure agricultural land access in California. The materials are listed in order of priority and are subject to funding availability.

1. Report of recommendations for the Governor and Legislature (required)
2. Website hosting report and additional information and resources
3. Fact sheets tailored to specific audiences:
 - a. Governor
 - b. Legislators
 - c. Priority producers and land stewards
 - d. Tribal Nations

- e. Land trusts
 - f. Community-based organizations and non-profits
 - g. Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and agricultural lenders
 - h. Local governments
4. Online resource repository with materials (final report, briefing materials, list of resources, datasets, factsheets, etc.) produced during the Task Force's convenings
- Note: There are different budget implications for resources that are kept updated versus stagnant*
5. Interactive map that overlays the following (pending available budget, staff resources, and impact in relation to cost and upkeep):
- a. CA Tribal Nations' ancestral lands and current landholdings: [NAHC Digital Atlas](#)
 - b. CA Department of Conservation's Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program farmland categorization: [California Important Farmland: 1984–2020](#)
 - c. Public land, jurisdictional boundaries, and excess/surplus sites
 - i. [GIS Mapping and Data Analytics | CAL FIRE](#)
 - ii. [Housing and Local Land Development](#)
 - d. Demographics:
 - i. CalEnviroScreen: [Maps & Data | OEHHA](#)
 - ii. USDA Ag Census Maps 2022: [Ag Census Web Maps](#)

Models of Similar Reports and Webpages

Below are examples of reports and websites that the Task Force may find helpful in considering the format and design of the report and accompanying website and other materials.

Staff will request Task Force members' perspectives on what would be most impactful and effective and will share members' feedback with the Strategic Growth Council communications team.

- Similar content and use of case studies to share experiences:
 - California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA)'s [2020 Farm Equity Report](#) and [Farm Equity Homepage](#)
- Engaging report with a robust website that is kept updated:

- California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force [2021 Action Plan](#) and [program website](#)
- Interactive web version of a county plan:
 - [OurCounty](#) regional sustainability plan for Los Angeles
- Website with a variety of ways to explore a complex set of reports:
 - California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment's [region- and subject-specific materials](#)

ACTION: Adopt a resolution on meeting scheduling

Possible Action

Adopt a resolution directing staff on scheduling practices for future Task Force meetings.

Background and Next Steps

The Task Force drafted language directing staff on scheduling practices during the March 27, 2025 meeting (see below).

At Task Force members' request, staff distributed the draft language to the members who were not in attendance at the March 27 meeting and requested their feedback. Staff have included their comments as tracked changes in the draft resolution.

The draft resolution also includes a small clarifying change made by staff: "the meeting will continue" has been revised as, "the date will be maintained."

Task Force Recommendation

Should the Task Force decide to adopt the resolution, the following motion language is suggested: "I move that the Task Force adopt the resolution on meeting scheduling."

Draft Resolution on Meeting Scheduling

Note: This language was drafted during the March 27 Task Force meeting. The tracked changes capture members' feedback following the March meeting.

For future (not already calendared) meetings of the full Task Force, the Task Force directs staff to schedule meetings according to all of the following criteria:

1. Bagley-Keene compliance,
2. Virtual or in-person availability of ~~either~~the Chair ~~and/or~~ Vice Chair, and
3. Virtual or in-person availability of at least two of three Tribal Representatives.

Once a Task Force meeting is scheduled, the date will be maintained regardless of changes in attendance, if Bagley-Keene compliance is maintained.