San Diego Trial Lawyer Warns Some Jurors May Turn to AI to Weigh Evidence and Enforcement Relies on Honor System

Ronald Laba says some jurors may be running expert testimony through AI tools that were never in the courtroom.

VISTA, CA, UNITED STATES, October 8, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A San Diego trial lawyer with more than four decades in the courtroom is warning that a new threat to the fair trial has arrived, and that current safeguards may not be enough to stop it.

Ronald B. Laba, a personal injury and mass tort attorney based in Vista, says he has heard of jurors taking careful notes on expert testimony, then going home and feeding those numbers into an artificial intelligence tool to decide which expert to believe.

“I’ve heard of jurors, sophisticated jurors, taking notes and then plugging in those theories and calculations given by expert witnesses — accident reconstructionists or others — into AI and then coming back with their own conclusions,” Laba said.

“They’re actually weighing evidence through an expert platform. That’s a much bigger problem than just somebody who reads a news story after being sworn in.”

The concern, Laba said, is not that jurors are curious. It is that the tool they consult heard none of the trial. It did not sit through cross-examination, did not watch the experts testify, and knows only what the juror typed into it. A juror who reads a news article gets one more opinion. A juror who asks an AI tool believes he is consulting a neutral authority, when he is consulting a system fed a one-sided summary.

Courts have adapted over the past decade to jurors who arrive already exposed to a case online. Laba said that shift became routine around 2015, when opposing counsel began receiving live feeds on prospective jurors during selection, including their politics, socio-economic status, and past social media posts about lawsuits.

“That’s before a single question was asked,” Laba said. “For most cases, that is now more the standard than the exception. If you didn’t do it, you might be criticized. You picked a bad jury.”

But the newer problem happens after the jury is seated, and the safeguard against it is thinner

than most people assume. Judges instruct jurors not to research a case or seek outside information. In practice, Laba said, the court order is difficult to monitor and enforce.

“The judge will order them not to,” he said. “But you’re right, at the end of it, the jurors are basically on the honor system.”

What worries him most is how much trust people place in the tools. “I know a lot of people, clients included, that really kind of view AI as infallible,” Laba said. Whatever such a tool tells a juror, he added, “would likely make a pretty big impression.”

Laba stressed that none of this has surfaced in his own cases and that he is describing what he has heard and seen across the profession. He also said the courtroom still matters for the cases that count most.

“You still need twelve people and real evidence,” he said. “The Internet can’t sentence anyone or write a check.”

Asked what a fair trial means in an era of instant information, Laba offered a definition that depends entirely on jurors keeping their word.

“Fair doesn’t mean nobody heard anything,” he said. “It just means twelve people who commit to deciding only what’s going on in the courtroom. And that commitment, in my opinion, it still means something, even in a noisy information environment.”

After 40 years, the threat he names is not the technology itself.

“I think what worries me the most is the erosion of patience,” Laba said. “This work depends on people willing to wait for a process, investigation, discovery, or sometimes a trial. But social media trains people to expect an instant verdict, and that’s a hard habit to unlearn in the jury box.”

About Ronald B. Laba

Ronald B. Laba is a personal injury and mass tort trial attorney and the founder of the Law Offices of Ronald B. Laba, APC, in Vista, California. Admitted to the California Bar in 1984, he represents people injured in car, truck, and motorcycle collisions across San Diego County. He is a graduate of the Gerry Spence Trial Lawyers College and a 2026 Best of North County Gold winner for Accident Law. Learn more at injurylawofsandiego.com.

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