



AI Technology Is Disruptive; **LET'S EMBRACE THE CHALLENGE**

“Most of the time change is a good thing and I think that’s what it’s all about—embracing change, being brave.” —Ted Lasso

AS PRESIDENT OF THE STATE BAR OF TEXAS, one of my major goals is to position the bar as a leader in addressing the impact of AI on the practice of law and in educating lawyers about its potential pitfalls and beneficial uses.

In June, the State Bar Board of Directors approved my request to form a workgroup, which the board later expanded to a full-fledged task force. The Taskforce for Responsible AI in the Law, or TRAIL, encompasses a diverse range of perspectives on technology and experience in the practice of law. Members include lawyers with expertise in AI technology, two judges, a former president of the State Bar of Texas Paralegal Division, a software engineer with insights into AI development, a law professor with specialized research in AI’s legal applications, and the CEO of a legal technology company.

Their mission is not just to investigate the impact of AI on the legal profession but also to consider how practitioners can leverage AI responsibly to enhance delivery of legal representation in Texas while upholding the integrity of the legal system. These are lofty but important goals in the face of what could be one of the most dramatic and disruptive technological changes in our lifetimes.

Although it has not reached any final conclusions, the task force has submitted an interim report to the board outlining the issues it has identified along with some potential recommendations. They include:

- Recommending that the State Bar undertake initiatives to provide lawyers with training on AI, its risks, and best practices for its use. These initiatives could include continuing legal education courses, articles, and web resources.
- Recommending that the State Bar provide information about the responsible use of AI to the public.
- Recommending that the State Bar’s Minimum Continuing Legal Education Committee consider including training on AI as a mandatory requirement.
- Recommending that the State Bar investigate the development of AI tools specific to the practice of law and consider how those tools could be made available to improve the practice of law in Texas.
- Recommending that the State Bar monitor AI and its use in legal practice on an ongoing basis.

To read the full interim report, go to texasbar.com/president and click the link under “Presidential Initiatives.”

As the task force examined the potential risks and benefits of AI, it became apparent that these issues impact other groups such as the courts, law schools, and legal regulators, to name a few. As a result, the task force invited stakeholders to an AI summit in March to continue discussing these issues and potential recommendations.

The task force is expected to give a brief report on the summit at the State Bar board’s next meeting on April 19 in Galveston. A more detailed written report will follow in the coming months.

I am proud of the work of the task force so far in positioning the State Bar to address these important issues, and I look forward to seeing its final recommendations. In the meantime, if you have feedback on these issues that you would like the State Bar to consider, please email it to TRAIL@texasbar.com.

CINDY TISDALE

President, 2023-2024
State Bar of Texas