

AI, LEGAL LABOR, AND THE JEVONS PARADOX

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Conventional wisdom holds that artificial intelligence will reduce demand for lawyers by automating tasks that once required human labor. This Essay challenges that assumption by applying the Jevons paradox to legal practice. In 1865, William Stanley Jevons observed that efficiency gains in resource use increase rather than decrease total consumption. This Essay argues that AI will expand legal work, create new categories of labor, and restructure rather than diminish the legal profession.

This Essay identifies four mechanisms through which the paradox manifests in legal practice. (1) Efficiency gains lower the effective cost of legal services, enabling clients who previously could not afford lawyers to enter the market. (2) Reduced costs surface vast latent demand: Ninety-two percent of civil legal problems faced by low-income Americans currently receive inadequate or no legal help, representing untapped market potential that AI could activate. (3) Quality standards evolve to expect the thoroughness that technology enables, converting efficiency gains into quality improvements rather than cost reductions. (4) AI creates new legal tasks (prompt engineering, quality verification, ethical oversight) even as it automates existing ones. Historical precedents from computerized legal research, word processing, and e-discovery demonstrate that legal technology consistently expands, rather than contracts, the profession.

This Essay examines implications for access to justice, showing how AI efficiency gains could serve the fifty million Americans currently excluded from legal assistance while simultaneously increasing aggregate legal work. The analysis explores how legal education must transform to prepare lawyers for practice where AI handles certain cognitive tasks while distinctly human capabilities become more valuable. Finally, this Essay identifies a regulatory complexity feedback mechanism: As AI reduces compliance costs, political economy dynamics may generate additional regulation that recreates the work AI displaced.

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INTRODUCTION

William Stanley Jevons wrote in 1865 that “it is wholly a confusion of ideas to suppose that the economical use of fuel is equivalent to a diminished consumption. The very contrary is the truth.”¹ His observation, drawn from studying steam engine improvements and coal consumption in England, established what economists now call the Jevons paradox: Efficiency gains in resource use increase rather than decrease total consumption.² As artificial intelligence (AI) transforms legal practice at an unprecedented pace, Jevons’s insight offers a counterintuitive but crucial lens for understanding what lies ahead.³ Conventional wisdom holds that AI will reduce demand for lawyers by automating tasks that once required human labor.⁴ This Essay

¹ WILLIAM STANLEY JEVONS, THE COAL QUESTION: AN INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PROGRESS OF THE NATION, AND THE PROBABLE EXHAUSTION OF OUR COAL-MINES 103 (London & Cambridge, MacMillan & Co. 1865) (arguing that efficiency in coal use tends to increase, not reduce, total consumption).

² See generally Blake Alcott, *Jevons’ Paradox*, 54 ECOLOGICAL ECON. 9 (2005) (surveying Jevons’s theoretical and empirical arguments that efficiency gains in coal use accelerated, rather than reduced, total consumption, and reviewing the modern “rebound” debate in ecological economics).

³ See generally RICHARD SUSSKIND & DANIEL SUSSKIND, THE FUTURE OF THE PROFESSIONS: HOW TECHNOLOGY WILL TRANSFORM THE WORK OF HUMAN EXPERTS (2015) (arguing that technology will fundamentally transform how legal and other professional expertise is delivered, displacing traditional professional roles in the long run).

⁴ See, e.g., Dana Remus & Frank Levy, *Can Robots Be Lawyers? Computers, Lawyers, and the Practice of Law*, 30 GEO. J. LEGAL ETHICS 501, 502–03 (2017) (describing how it has become “common wisdom” that technology will displace lawyers); John O. McGinnis & Russell G. Pearce, *The Great Disruption: How Machine Intelligence Will Transform the Role of Lawyers in the Delivery of Legal Services*, 82 FORDHAM L. REV. 3041, 3041–42 (2014) (noting how computers have or could take over human lawyers’ roles in discovery, document production, and predicting litigation outcomes).

argues the opposite.⁵ Efficiency gains from AI will expand legal work, create new categories of labor, and restructure, rather than diminish, the profession.⁶ The implications extend beyond employment statistics to encompass access to justice, professional ethics, and the role of law in society.⁷

Part I discusses the Jevons paradox and demonstrates how efficiency improvements across industries have expanded, rather than contracted, resource consumption. It then examines AI's current impact on legal practice and challenges the assumption that there is a fixed quantity of demand for legal labor. Part II analyzes mechanisms through which the paradox manifests in legal work, showing how efficiency gains lower costs, surface latent demand, raise quality standards, and create new legal tasks while automating existing ones. Part III addresses implications for access to justice and service to populations currently excluded from legal assistance, considers how the profession and legal education must transform, examines how AI affects billing practices and economic structures, and analyzes feedback mechanisms between AI efficiency and regulatory complexity.

I

THE EFFICIENCY PARADOX IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

A. *The Original Paradox and Its Modern Applications*

Jevons observed that James Watt's improvements to the steam engine, which vastly increased fuel efficiency, did not conserve England's coal supplies.⁸ Instead, they accelerated consumption by making coal-powered machinery economically viable across industries that previously could not afford it.⁹ The efficiency gains lowered the effective cost of coal's productive power, expanded the universe of applications, and increased aggregate demand far beyond what anyone anticipated.¹⁰ Jevons warned

⁵ See *infra* Section I.B.

⁶ James Bessen, *AI and Jobs: The Role of Demand*, in THE ECONOMICS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN AGENDA 291, 301, 303 (Ajay Agrawal, Joshua Gans & Avi Goldfarb eds., 2019) (arguing that AI's effect on employment depends critically on demand elasticity, and observing that the growth of electronic discovery applications has been associated with increased paralegal employment, illustrating how AI can expand rather than eliminate professional work).

⁷ See *infra* Part III.

⁸ See JEVONS, *supra* note 1, at 112 (describing the theoretical argument), 151 (noting that per capita coal consumption rose after steam engine improvements).

⁹ See, e.g., Alcott, *supra* note 2, at 13 (describing how falling prices for inputs can reduce production costs and increase industry demand).

¹⁰ See JEVONS, *supra* note 1, at 112–13 (describing how the steam engine would create increased demand for coal through new and increased applications).

Parliament that Britain faced a choice between “brief greatness and longer continued mediocrity” as its coal reserves depleted faster than policymakers understood.¹¹

Economists have refined Jevons’s insight into a sophisticated framework of rebound effects.¹² Daniel Khazzoom and Leonard Brookes independently developed what Harry Saunders named the “Khazzoom-Brookes Postulate” in 1992: Energy efficiency improvements that appear justified at the individual level lead to higher total energy consumption at the macroeconomic level given fixed energy prices.¹³ Further, Kenneth Gillingham, David Rapson, and Gernot Wagner demonstrated in their 2016 review that total microeconomic rebound effects typically range from 20 to 40%, with macroeconomic price effects adding another 20 to 30% for oil markets.¹⁴ When efficiency gains exceed 100% in their rebound effects, economists call this “backfire,” representing full manifestation of the Jevons paradox.¹⁵

These rebound effects operate through multiple channels.¹⁶ Efficiency improvements lower the effective price of a resource’s productive output, making previously uneconomical uses viable.¹⁷ Cost savings from efficiency gains redirect to other consumption that itself requires the resource.¹⁸ Economic growth stimulated by productivity improvements generates economy-wide demand increases that compound individual effects.¹⁹ Steve Sorrell’s comprehensive 2007 U.K. Energy Research Centre report

¹¹ See *id.* at 344, 349.

¹² See generally STEVEN SORRELL, U.K. ENERGY RSCH. CTR., *THE REBOUND EFFECT: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EVIDENCE FOR ECONOMY-WIDE ENERGY SAVINGS FROM IMPROVED ENERGY EFFICIENCY* (2007) (surveying direct, indirect, and economy-wide rebound mechanisms across sectors and concluding that rebound effects are significant enough to warrant explicit treatment in energy efficiency policy).

¹³ See, e.g., Harry D. Saunders, *The Khazzoom-Brookes Postulate and Neoclassical Growth*, 13 ENERGY J. 131, 135 (1992) (describing the postulate); Ted Nordhaus, *The Energy Rebound Battle*, ISSUES SCI. & TECH., Summer 2017, at 52 (same).

¹⁴ Kenneth Gillingham, David Rapson & Gernot Wagner, *The Rebound Effect and Energy Efficiency Policy*, 10 REV. ENV’T ECON. & POL’Y 68, 81, 85 (2016).

¹⁵ See, e.g., Timothy Garrett, *Rebound, Backfire, and the Jevons Paradox*, UNIV. OF UTAH (2014), <https://www.inscc.utah.edu/~tgarrett/jevons-paradox> [<https://perma.cc/G9HZ-25KS>] (defining the backfire effect).

¹⁶ See Gillingham, Rapson & Wagner, *supra* note 14, at 71, 78 (discussing theoretical and empirical evidence behind the various channels).

¹⁷ See MANUEL LLORCA & TOORAJ JAMASB, COPENHAGEN BUS. SCH., *REBOUND EFFECT IN ENERGY CONSUMPTION I* (2020) (describing how the “direct rebound effect” leads to lower energy prices and increased demand).

¹⁸ See *id.* (describing the “indirect” microeconomic rebound effect).

¹⁹ Gillingham, Rapson & Wagner, *supra* note 14, at 79 (explaining that energy efficiency improvements may spur macroeconomic growth, which in turn requires additional energy consumption across the broader economy).

documented these mechanisms across sectors and concluded that while full backfire may be rare, significant rebound effects may be widespread.²⁰

Transportation provides the most vivid contemporary illustration. Gilles Duranton and Matthew Turner provided evidence for what they called the “fundamental law of road congestion” through rigorous empirical analysis: New highway capacity generates traffic increases at a nearly one-to-one ratio.²¹ Build a new lane, and within approximately five years, induced demand will fill it to the same congestion level as before.²² The efficiency improvement, meant to reduce travel times, instead enables more travel.²³ Computing offers an equally striking example. The changes described by Moore’s Law (the principle that transistor density roughly doubles every two to three years while per-unit manufacturing costs fall proportionally) produced staggering efficiency gains in processing power per dollar,²⁴ yet total spending on computing has risen continuously for decades.²⁵ Wirth’s Law captures this phenomenon: Software bloats faster than hardware improves because efficiency gains enable new applications rather than reduce consumption.²⁶

B. *The Legal Profession Confronts Its Coal Question*

The legal profession now faces its own version of Jevons’s coal question. Artificial intelligence promises efficiency gains that proponents describe as transformative and skeptics view as threatening. Goldman Sachs estimated in 2023 that 44% of legal tasks could be automated in the United States.²⁷ The 2024 ABA Legal Technology Survey found that AI adoption among lawyers nearly tripled in a single year, from 11% to 30%, with large

²⁰ SORRELL, *supra* note 12, at 87–88 (surveying rebound effect estimates, most of which are greater than zero but less than full backfire).

²¹ See Gilles Duranton & Matthew A. Turner, *The Fundamental Law of Road Congestion: Evidence from US Cities*, 101 AM. ECON. REV. 2616, 2645 (2011) (estimating a one-to-one increase in traffic on urban interstate highways and large, but not complete, increases on other roads).

²² Kent Hymel, *If You Build It, They Will Drive: Measuring Induced Demand for Vehicle Travel in Urban Areas*, 76 TRANSP. POL’Y 57, 57 (2019).

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ Kenneth Flamm, *Measuring Moore’s Law: Evidence from Price, Cost, and Quality Indexes*, in MEASURING AND ACCOUNTING FOR INNOVATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY 403, 408 (Carol Corrado, Jonathan Haskel, Javier Miranda & Daniel Sichel eds., 2021).

²⁵ See *Private Fixed Investment in Information Processing Equipment and Software*, FRED ECON. DATA, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/A679RC1Q027SBEA> [<https://perma.cc/R9RP-879D>] (last visited May 21, 2026).

²⁶ Niklaus Wirth, *A Plea for Lean Software*, 28 COMPUTER 64, 64 (1995).

²⁷ JAN HATZUIS, JOSEPH BRIGGS, DEVESH KODNANI & GIOVANNI PIERDOMENICO, GOLDMAN SACHS, *THE POTENTIALLY LARGE EFFECTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON ECONOMIC GROWTH* 6 (2023).

firms adopting at even higher rates.²⁸ Tools like Harvey, CoCounsel, and Lexis+ AI now perform legal research, document review, contract analysis, and drafting tasks that once consumed thousands of billable hours.²⁹

Capital markets reflect this paradigm shift. Historically, legal technology matured slowly; LegalZoom required over two decades to reach an IPO.³⁰ The post-2023 landscape has inverted this timeline. By late 2025, platforms like Harvey achieved valuations in the billions of dollars and annual recurring revenues of one hundred million dollars in under three years.³¹ This velocity was previously unimaginable in the legal sector. This unprecedented capital influx represents a wager on market expansion, not contraction.³²

Dana Remus and Frank Levy's influential 2017 Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics article, "Can Robots Be Lawyers?" provided early empirical analysis of automation's potential scope.³³ They concluded that while AI would transform many legal tasks, complete lawyer replacement remained unlikely because law involves "unscripted human interaction" and requires

²⁸ See, e.g., *AI Integration in Law: A Growing Trend as Adoption Triples in 2024*, ABA Survey Finds, LEGAL NEWS FEED (Mar. 7, 2025), <https://legalnewsfeed.com/2025/03/07/ai-integration-in-law> [<https://perma.cc/N9SH-G8ME>].

²⁹ See THOMSON REUTERS, FUTURE OF PROFESSIONALS REPORT: AI POWERED TECHNOLOGY AND THE FORCES SHAPING PROFESSIONAL WORK 4, 6 (2024) (reporting survey data predicting that AI could save each U.S. lawyer as many as two hundred billable hours per year, worth \$100,000 in recaptured revenue); Bob Ambrogi, *Legal AI Tools Show Promise in First-of-Its-Kind Benchmark Study*, LAWSITES (Feb. 28, 2025), <https://www.lawnext.com/2025/02/legal-ai-tools-show-promise> [<https://perma.cc/U3KP-9PKX>] (reporting that AI tools completed legal tasks six to eighty times faster than a lawyer control group across document extraction, summarization, and analysis tasks); HARVEY, <https://www.harvey.ai> [<https://perma.cc/DAE5-UFUC>] (last visited May 17, 2026); Lexis+ with Protégé, LEXISNEXIS, <https://www.lexisnexis.com/en-us/products/lexis-plus-ai.page> [<https://perma.cc/D9AW-DEXF>] (last visited May 17, 2026); COCOUNSEL, <https://www.thomsonreuters.com/en/cocounsel> [<https://perma.cc/B6XB-SXN8>] (last visited May 17, 2026).

³⁰ See *Investor FAQs*, LEGALZOOM, <https://investors.legalzoom.com/investor-resources/investor-faqs> [<https://perma.cc/PDD9-FYKW>] (last visited May 19, 2026) (noting LegalZoom's IPO came nearly twenty-two years after its founding).

³¹ See Raymond Blyd, *Legal Tech Raised \$6Bn in 2025 as AI Boom Shows Divisions*, ARTIFICIAL LAW. (Jan. 6, 2026), <https://www.artificiallawyer.com/2026/01/06/legal-tech-raised-6bn-in-2025-as-ai-boom-shows-divisions> [<https://perma.cc/9TY4-WNFQ>] (reporting Harvey's valuation at \$8 billion and Legora's at \$1.7 billion); Ashley Capoot, *Legal AI Startup Harvey Hits \$100 Million in Annual Recurring Revenue*, CNBC (Aug. 4, 2025, at 09:00 ET), <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/08/04/legal-ai-startup-harvey-revenue.html> [<https://perma.cc/9CEG-2M7R>].

³² See, e.g., Richard D. Harroch, *The M&A LegalTech Boom*, FORBES (Nov. 13, 2025), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2025/10/31/the-ma-legaltech-boom> [<https://perma.cc/GMU7-UL59>] (noting that these large inflows suggest private equity firms think legal AI will be transformational).

³³ Remus & Levy, *supra* note 4.

judgment that machines cannot replicate.³⁴ Similarly, John McGinnis and Russell Pearce predicted in 2014 that machine intelligence would transform legal services delivery without eliminating lawyers entirely.³⁵ These predictions anticipated dynamics that scholars have since argued may prove even more far-reaching than originally envisioned.³⁶

The critical insight comes from an examination of what happens when legal work becomes more efficient. Conventional analysis treats legal labor as a fixed quantity that technology either performs or eliminates, but cannot complement.³⁷ This assumption embodies what economists call the lump-of-labor fallacy: the mistaken belief that an economy contains a fixed quantity of work to distribute among available workers.³⁸ As a counterpoint, David Autor and colleagues demonstrated that approximately sixty percent of current American jobs represent work categories that did not exist in 1940.³⁹ Technology does not simply reallocate fixed work; it creates new categories that expand total labor demand.

James Bessen's research on bank tellers and ATMs illustrates this dynamic with particular clarity. When ATMs proliferated in the 1970s and thereafter, conventional wisdom predicted massive teller job losses.⁴⁰ The opposite occurred.⁴¹ ATMs did reduce the number of tellers required per branch from about twenty in 1988 to thirteen in 2004.⁴² This cost reduction made opening new branches economically viable, and urban bank branches

³⁴ See *id.* at 512 (describing tasks that would be difficult to accomplish through machine learning, including answering unexpected questions and understanding human emotions).

³⁵ McGinnis & Pearce, *supra* note 4, at 3042, 3054–55 (predicting that while lawyers doing routine services would be harmed by AI, “superstars” who adapt quickly could benefit).

³⁶ See, e.g., Frank Fagan, *A View of How Language Models Will Transform Law*, 92 TENN. L. REV. 1, 10, 55–59 (2024) (arguing that LLMs may drive law firm consolidation and fundamentally shift the balance of power between attorneys and firms).

³⁷ David H. Autor, *Why Are There Still So Many Jobs? The History and Future of Workplace Automation*, 29 J. ECON. PERSPS. 3, 5 (2015) (observing that “journalists and even expert commentators tend to overstate the extent of machine substitution for human labor and ignore the strong complementarities between automation and labor that increase productivity, raise earnings, and augment demand for labor”).

³⁸ See Tom Walker, *Why Economists Dislike a Lump of Labor*, 65 REV. SOC. ECON. 279, 279–80 (2007) (describing the lump-of-labor fallacy as “one of the ‘best known fallacies in economics’” and explaining it as the misconception that there is a finite, distributable amount of work in an economy).

³⁹ David Autor, Caroline Chin, Anna Salomons & Bryan Seegmiller, *New Frontiers: The Origins and Content of New Work, 1940–2018*, 139 Q.J. ECON. 1399, 1410 (2024).

⁴⁰ See JAMES E. BESSEN, *LEARNING BY DOING: THE REAL CONNECTION BETWEEN INNOVATION, WAGES, AND WEALTH* 107 (2015) (noting that bankers in 1980 predicted electronic transactions would reduce bank branches and eliminate support staff).

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² *Id.*

increased by forty-three percent.⁴³ Total teller employment grew even as tellers per branch declined.⁴⁴ Efficiency gains expanded the market rather than contracted the workforce.

Legal services differ fundamentally from coal in their heterogeneity. A complex merger negotiation is not a standardized commodity. This distinction does not exempt legal work from Jevons's dynamic, however, because legal services can be broken down into a series of standardized commodities. As Richard Susskind observes, even bespoke legal matters consist of routine components, such as document review, due diligence, and basic contract drafting.⁴⁵ AI commoditizes these sub-tasks, rendering them subject to the paradox.

II

MECHANISMS OF EXPANSION IN LEGAL WORK

A. *How the Paradox Manifests in Legal Work*

The Jevons paradox manifests in legal practice through several interconnected mechanisms. Efficiency gains lower the effective cost of legal services, enabling clients who previously could not afford lawyers to enter the market. Lower costs per task enable clients to request more thorough work on each matter. Reduced barriers to access create new categories of legal demand that did not previously exist. Standards of care evolve to expect the thoroughness that technology enables, converting efficiency gains into quality improvements rather than cost reductions.

The access to justice crisis reveals vast latent demand for legal services that currently goes unmet. The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) found that low-income Americans received inadequate or no legal help with 92% of their civil legal problems.⁴⁶ Approximately fifty million Americans live in households below 125% of the federal poverty threshold.⁴⁷ LSC-funded organizations receive nearly two million requests for assistance annually and turn away 49% of them due to insufficient resources.⁴⁸ The United States ranks 112th among 143 countries in accessibility and affordability of civil

⁴³ *Id.*

⁴⁴ See *id.* at 106 (showing in Table 7.1 that bank teller employment grew by 123,440 jobs between 1999 and 2009 despite ATM proliferation).

⁴⁵ See RICHARD SUSSKIND, TOMORROW'S LAWYERS: AN INTRODUCTION TO YOUR FUTURE 29–33 (2013) (“decomposing” litigation and transactional work into a list of tasks).

⁴⁶ LEGAL SERVS. CORP., THE JUSTICE GAP: THE UNMET CIVIL LEGAL NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME AMERICANS 7 (2022).

⁴⁷ *Id.*

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 9.

justice.⁴⁹ As of 2018, at least one party appears without counsel in more than two-thirds of state court cases; in family law matters, at least one party proceeds pro se in nearly 80% of cases.⁵⁰

This massive unmet demand represents what Richard Susskind has called the “latent legal market.”⁵¹ The current legal services market totals approximately \$437 billion annually, but 77% of potential demand remains “below the waterline,” invisible to traditional practice because cost barriers exclude it.⁵² If AI reduces the cost of delivering legal services, this latent demand could surface. People who currently handle landlord disputes, consumer protection issues, family law matters, and employment problems without lawyers could seek legal assistance when it becomes affordable. The total market for legal services could expand dramatically even as cost per service declines.

Historical precedent supports this prediction. When Lexis introduced computer-assisted legal research in 1973, it significantly reduced the amount of time required for case law research.⁵³ Rather than billing fewer hours, lawyers conducted more thorough research, creating new expectations about adequate representation that persist today.⁵⁴ When word processing became

⁴⁹ *U.S. Drops to 112th Out of 143 Countries in Access to Civil Justice*, NAT’L COAL. FOR CIV. RIGHT TO COUNS., https://civilrighttocounsel.org/major_developments/u-s-rank-on-access-to-civil-justice-in-rule-of-law-index-116th-out-of-142-countries [https://perma.cc/Z4UQ-CVQJ] (last visited May 22, 2026).

⁵⁰ Deborah L. Rhode, Kevin Eaton & Anna Porto, *Access to Justice Through Limited Legal Assistance*, 16 NW. J. HUM. RTS. 1, 3 (2018).

⁵¹ See RICHARD SUSSKIND, *THE FUTURE OF LAW: FACING THE CHALLENGES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY* 27 (1996) (defining the “latent legal market” as circumstances in which individuals cannot obtain needed legal input because conventional legal service is too costly or impractical); see also Sara Merken, *Why Clio’s Jack Newton Sees Profits and Progress in the “Latent Legal Market,”* REUTERS (Aug. 12, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/legal/legalindustry/why-clios-jack-newton-sees-profits-progress-latent-legal-market-2021-08-12> [https://perma.cc/QFH8-5YP2] (discussing examples of how technology can address the latent legal market in areas like divorce and entity management). See generally Stephanie Kimbro & Richard Granat, *Serving Clients of Moderate Means with Online Legal Services*, in *REINVENTING THE PRACTICE OF LAW* 61, 61 (Luz Herrera ed., 2014) (describing possible uses for online legal services, especially for low-income clients); JACK NEWTON, *THE CLIENT-CENTERED LAW FIRM: HOW TO SUCCEED IN AN EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN WORLD* 29–43 (2020) (discussing how client-centered law firms can unlock latent demand by improving the legal consumer experience).

⁵² MATTERS: *Why the Latent Legal Market Matters* (Spotify, Feb. 10, 2020).

⁵³ William G. Harrington, *A Brief History of Computer-Assisted Legal Research*, 77 L. LIBR. J. 543, 553 (1984) (describing the increase in research done with Lexis after its introduction in 1973).

⁵⁴ See Richard M. McGonigal, *Implementation and Cost Effectiveness of Computerized Legal Research - Lexis and Westlaw Compared*, 1 COMPUT. L.J. 359, 361–62 (1978) (noting that computerized legal research raised expectations of thoroughness and professional competence rather than simply reducing research time).

standard in law offices during the 1970s and 1980s, documents did not become shorter.⁵⁵ They became longer and more detailed as word processing made revision easier and allowed practitioners to pack substantially more text onto a page.⁵⁶ When electronic discovery tools emerged following the 2006 amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, litigation did not become simpler or cheaper.⁵⁷ E-discovery generated an entirely new practice specialty, spawned a multi-billion dollar vendor industry, and vastly increased the volume of material subject to production.⁵⁸

Maura Grossman and Gordon Cormack have established that technology-assisted review in e-discovery can outperform exhaustive manual review in both effectiveness and efficiency.⁵⁹ Yet this efficiency gain did not reduce discovery costs or legal labor. Instead, it made reviewing larger document sets feasible, expanded the scope of discoverable material, and created new categories of expertise in managing these processes.⁶⁰ Courts that approved predictive coding did so precisely because it enabled more thorough review, not because it eliminated review entirely.⁶¹

B. Induced Demand and the Expansion of Legal Work

Induced demand provides a useful framework for understanding how efficiency gains create new legal work. Just as expanded highway capacity induced additional driving that filled new lanes, AI efficiency gains could induce additional legal demand that would consume newly available capacity. This dynamic could occur through both supply-side and demand-

⁵⁵ FED. R. APP. P. 32 advisory committee's note to 1998 amendment, subdiv. (a)(7) (noting that the prior fifty-page limit "was established when most briefs were produced on typewriters" and that the widespread use of personal computers made that limit "virtually meaningless").

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ See NICHOLAS M. PACE & LAURA ZAKARAS, WHERE THE MONEY GOES: UNDERSTANDING LITIGANT EXPENDITURES FOR PRODUCING ELECTRONIC DISCOVERY 1–3 (2012).

⁵⁸ See, e.g., Peter Gronvall & Nathaniel Huber-Fliflet, *Humans Against the Machines: Is Predictive Coding Really Better Than Humans? – Part I*, NAT'L L. REV. (Mar. 2, 2021), <https://natlawreview.com/article/humans-against-machines-predictive-coding-really-better-humans-part-1> [<https://perma.cc/PC6Y-E5KZ>] (describing e-discovery as a "multi-billion dollar" industry); Maura R. Grossman & Gordon V. Cormack, *Technology-Assisted Review in E-Discovery Can Be More Effective and More Efficient than Exhaustive Manual Review*, 17 RICH. J.L. & TECH., no. 3, 2011, at 1, 7 (observing that manual review costs dominate the e-discovery process).

⁵⁹ Grossman & Cormack, *supra* note 58, at 2.

⁶⁰ Duncan Williams, *There Is Nothing to Fear from Technology Assisted Review*, ACC DOCKET (Sep. 1, 2016), <https://docket.acc.com/there-nothing-fear-technology-assisted-review> [<https://perma.cc/4439-QBZ5>].

⁶¹ See, e.g., *Moore v. Publicis Groupe*, 287 F.R.D. 182, 187 (S.D.N.Y. 2012) (noting that computer-assisted review "works better than most of the alternatives . . . without nearly as much cost" and emphasizing its efficiency and proportionality rather than the elimination of human review).

side channels.

On the supply side, AI enables lawyers to undertake work they would previously have declined due to cost constraints. For example, a solo practitioner who could not profitably handle a complex contract matter at traditional rates might accept that engagement when AI substantially reduces the time required. Similarly, a legal aid organization that turns away clients because its staff cannot handle the volume might serve a significantly larger caseload when AI augments staff productivity. The threshold for economically viable legal work shifts, bringing matters above the line that previously fell below it.

On the demand side, clients who observe lower costs and faster turnaround might request more legal assistance. For example, a business that currently submits only high-value contracts for review might submit all contracts for review when cost per contract drops substantially. Similarly, an individual who tolerates a defective product because pursuing the claim seems uneconomical might assert that claim when AI makes consumer protection work affordable. As a final example, a family that foregoes estate planning because legal fees seem prohibitive might finally create wills, trusts, and powers of attorney when costs decline to accessible levels.

The 2025 ABA Task Force on Law and Artificial Intelligence documented more than one hundred AI use cases in legal aid settings that expand access rather than reduce employment.⁶² Colleen Chien and Miriam Kim reported that AI increases productivity of legal aid organizations and delivers understandable legal information directly to self-represented litigants.⁶³ These gains do not eliminate legal work.⁶⁴ They surface latent demand that the current system cannot satisfy.⁶⁵

Daron Acemoglu and Pascual Restrepo developed a sophisticated contemporary economic framework for understanding these dynamics in

⁶² Bob Ambrogi, *ABA Task Force: AI Has Moved from Experiment to Infrastructure for the Legal Profession*, LAWSITES (Dec. 16, 2025), <https://www.lawnext.com/2025/12/aba-task-force-ai-has-moved-from-experiment-to-infrastructure-for-the-legal-profession.html> [<https://perma.cc/T4NR-FVQ2>].

⁶³ Colleen V. Chien & Miriam Kim, *Generative AI and Legal Aid: Results from a Field Study and 100 Use Cases to Bridge the Access to Justice Gap*, 57 LOY. L.A. L. REV. 903, 909, 933–35, 954–57, 965–68 (2024) (reporting that ninety percent of pilot participants experienced increased productivity and describing AI translation tools and consumer-facing platforms that deliver legal information directly to unrepresented individuals).

⁶⁴ *Id.* at 964–65 (finding that pilot participants viewed AI as augmenting rather than replacing legal work, with seventy-one percent expecting AI to replace elements of their jobs in a positive way).

⁶⁵ *Id.* at 907–08 (noting that legal aid organizations are “often oversubscribed, addressing only a fraction of the need” among low-income Americans with civil legal problems).

their 2019 article, *Automation and New Tasks*.⁶⁶ They demonstrated that automation creates a displacement effect that reduces labor's share of value-added production, but this effect is counterbalanced by a reinstatement effect from creating new tasks where labor retains a comparative advantage.⁶⁷ Introducing new tasks always raises labor demand.⁶⁸ Between 1947 and 1987, despite substantial automation, new task creation offset displacement effects and labor demand increased by approximately 0.47% annually through reinstatement effects alone.⁶⁹

The legal profession exhibits this pattern clearly. AI excels at pattern matching, document classification, and extracting information from large text corpora.⁷⁰ These capabilities automate certain existent components of legal work. But AI also creates new tasks: prompt engineering to extract optimal outputs, quality verification to catch hallucinations and errors, and ethical oversight of AI use.⁷¹ Lawyers in 2030 might spend their time differently than lawyers in 2020, but this Essay predicts that they will not spend less time practicing law.

III

IMPLICATIONS FOR JUSTICE, THE PROFESSION, AND REGULATION

A. *The Access to Justice Implications*

Environmental justice scholarship provides useful conceptual tools for understanding how efficiency gains distribute across populations. Parth Vaishnav argues that green technology adoption creates new inequalities unless carefully managed.⁷² Those excluded from efficient new technologies bear the costs of maintaining legacy infrastructure while others capture efficiency benefits.⁷³ The legal profession faces analogous dynamics.

If AI dramatically reduces the cost of legal services, the benefits will

⁶⁶ Daron Acemoglu & Pascual Restrepo, *Automation and New Tasks: How Technology Displaces and Reinstates Labor*, 33 J. ECON. PERSPS. 3 (2019).

⁶⁷ *Id.* at 4.

⁶⁸ *Id.* at 11.

⁶⁹ *Id.* at 16.

⁷⁰ McGinnis & Pearce, *supra* note 4, at 3047, 3049, 3052.

⁷¹ See A.B.A., 2025 INNOVATION TRENDS REPORT 12–23 (2025), <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/center-for-innovation/2025-itr.pdf> [<https://perma.cc/YUH2-L4PB>] (cataloging AI use cases in legal practice, including prompt engineering, quality verification, and ethical oversight, and concluding that AI augments rather than replaces attorney work).

⁷² See generally Parth Vaishnav, *Implications of Green Technologies for Environmental Justice*, 48 ANN. REV. ENV'T & RES. 505 (2023).

⁷³ *Id.* at 511.

flow primarily to those who can access AI-enhanced practice. Large corporations with sophisticated in-house legal departments will integrate AI tools rapidly, reducing outside counsel costs while maintaining or improving service quality. Well-resourced individuals will find sophisticated legal assistance more affordable. But those at the margins, including pro se litigants, individuals in rural areas with limited internet access, non-English speakers, and the technologically unsophisticated, may find themselves worse off in relative terms even as the overall market expands.

This creates both challenge and opportunity. The challenge involves ensuring that AI efficiency gains do not exacerbate existing inequalities in access to justice. The opportunity involves deliberately deploying those efficiency gains to serve populations currently excluded from legal assistance. LSC's technology initiatives, including the A2J Author platform that has been used over seven million times across forty-two states, demonstrate this potential.⁷⁴ AI could extend this model dramatically by providing competent legal assistance to the ninety-two percent of low-income Americans whose civil legal problems currently receive inadequate attention.⁷⁵

Individual affordability differs from institutional viability. For a family in poverty, reducing legal fees from \$250 to \$25 per hour may still leave counsel out of reach. The efficiency paradox operates here not through direct consumer purchase, but by altering the subsidy threshold. For legal aid organizations and pro bono clinics operating on fixed budgets, AI acts as a force multiplier. If technology reduces the labor cost of a tenant defense case by eighty percent, a legal aid clinic can represent five clients for the cost of one. The demand that surfaces is mediated through institutions that can finally afford to service the latent market, bridging the gap between theoretical efficiency and actual access.

Regulatory reform will determine how these possibilities unfold. Jeff Ward at Duke Law has advocated reforming unauthorized practice of law rules to create safe harbors for responsible legal technology that serves unmet needs.⁷⁶ At least a dozen states, including Utah, California, and Arizona, have begun exploring such reforms.⁷⁷ The 2003 UK study by

⁷⁴ *What Is A2J Author?*, CTR. FOR COMPUT.-ASSISTED LEGAL INSTRUCTION, <https://www.cali.org/faq/15690> [<https://perma.cc/L52D-TDRQ>] (last visited Jan. 27, 2026).

⁷⁵ LEGAL SERVS. CORP., *supra* note 46, at 7 (noting the staggering statistics regarding low-income individuals' access to legal services).

⁷⁶ Jeff Ward, *Expanding Access to Justice Through Responsible Legal Technology*, DUKE L. (Oct. 7, 2025), <https://law.duke.edu/news/expanding-access-justice-through-responsible-legal-technology> [<https://perma.cc/K5VU-2YEP>].

⁷⁷ See David Freeman Engstrom, Natalie A. Knowlton & Lucy Ricca, *Legal Innovation After*

Moorhead, Paterson, and Sherr found that non-lawyer specialists often outperformed lawyers in concrete results and client satisfaction for routine matters, suggesting that “specialization, not professional status” predicts quality.⁷⁸ AI-enabled legal services could provide similar benefits if regulatory frameworks evolve to permit them.

However, expanding legal services to previously unserved populations would increase, rather than decrease, aggregate legal work. If AI helped fifty million low-income Americans obtain legal assistance they currently lack, the total volume of legal matters handled would rise substantially. Individual costs might decline, but aggregate demand for legal labor would grow. This is precisely the dynamic Jevons identified: Efficiency improvements that make resource use affordable expand consumption beyond the efficiency gains themselves.

B. Implications for Legal Education and Professional Preparation

The Jevons paradox framework has significant implications for legal education and the development of future lawyers. Predictions that AI will eliminate junior lawyer positions and collapse the law firm pyramid structure may prove as misguided as predictions that ATMs would eliminate bank tellers. The nature of junior lawyer work may change, but the amount of work will likely increase rather than decrease.

Andrew Perlman observed that “AI will not eliminate the need for lawyers, but it does portend the end of lawyering as we know it.”⁷⁹ This reformulation captures the key insight. Law schools must prepare students for practice in which AI handles certain cognitive tasks that once constituted entry-level work, while new categories of work emerge that require distinctly human capabilities. The National Association for Law Placement reported that 93.4% of 2024 law graduates obtained employment within ten months, the highest rate on record, and law firm hiring rose more than 12% from 2023 to 2024.⁸⁰ If AI threatened lawyer employment, these figures would already

Reform: Five Years of Data on Regulatory Change, RHODE CTR. ON LEGAL PRO. (June 2, 2025), <https://clp.law.stanford.edu/publications/legal-innovation-after-reform-five-years-of-data-on-regulatory-change> [<https://perma.cc/P3D6-7ZJE>]; Ward, *supra* note 76.

⁷⁸ Richard Moorhead, Avrom Sherr & Alan Paterson, *Contesting Professionalism: Legal Aid and Nonlawyers in England and Wales*, 37 L. & SOC’Y REV. 765, 794–95 (2003).

⁷⁹ Andrew Perlman, *The Implications of ChatGPT for Legal Services and Society*, HARV. L. SCH. CTR. ON LEGAL PRO. (Apr. 2023), <https://clp.law.harvard.edu/article/the-implications-of-chatgpt-for-legal-services-and-society> [<https://perma.cc/KD92-LYB3>].

⁸⁰ *Class of 2024 Achieves Record Employment*, NALP (Sep. 2025), <https://www.nalp.org/0925research> [<https://perma.cc/WQ8P-NCGS>].

show decline.⁸¹ Instead, they show growth during a period of rapid AI adoption.

The skills that distinguish human lawyers from AI systems, and that will become more, rather than less, valuable, include strategic judgment about client objectives, emotional intelligence in managing relationships, advocacy requiring persuasion of human decision-makers, ethical reasoning about novel situations, and creative problem-solving that transcends pattern matching. Legal education that develops these capabilities will prepare students for a profession transformed by AI but not displaced by it.

This shift parallels the emergence of “vibe coding” in computer science, where engineers move from writing syntax to managing high-level intent.⁸² Legal practice is transitioning toward intent-based lawyering. The lawyer’s primary value shifts from manual assembly of clauses to architectural design of legal outcomes. In this model, the lawyer defines the strategic objective, and AI generates the textual execution, which the lawyer then verifies against client needs. Proficiency in this architectural oversight must become a cornerstone of legal education.

Julian Nyarko of Stanford Law has observed that AI “reasoning models still don’t fully reason about problems like we humans do.”⁸³ The MIT Technology Review’s December 2025 analysis concluded that despite passing the bar exam, large language models still cannot “think like lawyers.”⁸⁴ It is unlikely these limitations are temporary defects to fix in future versions.⁸⁵ They appear to reflect fundamental differences between pattern matching and genuine understanding.⁸⁶ Law practice requires understanding that AI may not be able to replicate because it involves normative judgment about human values, contextual sensitivity to facts and circumstances, and strategic reasoning about other actors’ likely responses.

C. *The Billable Hour and Economic Structure*

The economics of legal practice will evolve in complex ways under AI

⁸¹ See U.S. BUREAU OF LAB. STAT., OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK: LAWYERS (2025), <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/legal/lawyers.htm> [<https://perma.cc/WQZ8-NSZU>] (reporting 864,800 lawyers employed in 2024, with employment projected to grow four percent through 2034).

⁸² Rhiannon Williams, *What Is Vibe Coding, Exactly?*, MIT TECH. REV. (Apr. 16, 2025), <https://www.technologyreview.com/2025/04/16/1115135/what-is-vibe-coding-exactly> [<https://perma.cc/Y6N7-UWVY>].

⁸³ Michelle Kim, *AI Might Not Be Coming for Lawyers’ Jobs Anytime Soon*, MIT TECH. REV. (Dec. 15, 2025), <https://www.technologyreview.com/2025/12/15/1129181/ai-might-not-be-coming-for-lawyers-jobs-anytime-soon> [<https://perma.cc/P78V-M8B2>].

⁸⁴ *Id.*

⁸⁵ *See id.*

⁸⁶ *See id.*

influence, but predictions of billable hour obsolescence appear premature. Nancy Rapoport and Joseph Tiano analyzed how generative AI might affect billing practices.⁸⁷ They identified three reasons law firms have not abandoned hourly billing despite decades of pressure: no external catalyst has forced change, clients have tolerated the status quo, and the model simplifies inherently complex value determinations.⁸⁸ AI may eventually provide the catalyst, but transformation will occur gradually rather than suddenly.⁸⁹

Bloomberg Law reported in 2025 that expectations exceeded reality regarding AI's impact on alternative fee arrangements.⁹⁰ Only 9% of firms observed the shifts toward alternative billing that 39% had predicted.⁹¹ The billable hour persists because legal work is genuinely unpredictable, and hourly billing distributes the risk of that unpredictability in ways that both lawyers and clients have accepted.⁹² AI may shift some of that risk profile, but it likely will not eliminate the underlying uncertainty that makes hourly billing attractive.

Moreover, efficiency gains may increase, rather than decrease, the value of each billable hour.⁹³ If a lawyer using AI tools can accomplish in one hour what previously required ten, the value delivered per hour increases tenfold. Clients may resist paying ten-hour rates for one-hour work, but they should willingly pay premium hourly rates for AI-enhanced productivity. The irony of AI efficiency, as Bloomberg Law noted, is that it often increases perceived value.⁹⁴ A more productive lawyer whose hours produce greater value commands higher rates, not fewer hours.

This dynamic creates pressure toward quality competition rather than price competition. Law firms that use AI effectively will deliver better work,

⁸⁷ Nancy B. Rapoport & Joseph R. Tiano, Jr., *Fighting the Hypothetical: Why Law Firms Should Rethink the Billable Hour in the Generative AI Era*, 20 WASH. J.L., TECH. & ARTS 41 (2024).

⁸⁸ *Id.* at 41.

⁸⁹ *Id.* at 42, 95 (noting that interviewed law firm leaders viewed the transformation as “evolution rather than revolution”).

⁹⁰ Linda Masina, *Analysis: AI in Law Firms: 2024 Predictions; 2025 Perceptions*, BLOOMBERG L. (Aug. 15, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/bloomberg-law-analysis/analysis-ai-in-law-firms-2024-predictions-2025-perceptions> [https://perma.cc/M67X-J65V].

⁹¹ *Id.*

⁹² Michael Grupp, *AI Boosts Legal Productivity Without Toppling Billable Hours*, BLOOMBERG L. (Dec. 3, 2025, at 04:30 ET), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/legal-exchange-insights-and-commentary/ai-boosts-legal-productivity-without-toppling-billable-hours> [https://perma.cc/H2KP-3L8P].

⁹³ *Id.*

⁹⁴ *Id.*

not just cheaper work. Clients will select firms based on the quality of AI integration and the judgment lawyers bring to AI-assisted analysis. Competition will shift toward excellence rather than efficiency alone.

D. The Regulatory Complexity Engine

AI efficiency gains interact with regulatory complexity in ways that may paradoxically increase legal work. As organizations become capable of navigating more complex regulatory environments at lower cost, political economy dynamics may generate additional regulation.⁹⁵ The Network Law Review published analysis suggesting that “compliance zero,” the theoretical endpoint of AI handling all regulatory compliance, could “lead us to expand the regulatory state in ways we should resist,” by eliminating the friction that disciplines regulatory proliferation.⁹⁶

When compliance costs functioned as an implicit brake on regulatory ambition, policymakers balanced substantive goals against implementation burdens.⁹⁷ If AI removes that brake, new regulations may multiply without traditional constraints. Each new regulation creates legal work: analyzing requirements, designing compliance programs, monitoring adherence, responding to enforcement, and litigating disputes. The efficiency that enables organizations to handle existing regulation may generate demand for new regulation that recreates the work AI displaced.

This feedback mechanism operates at multiple levels. Individual organizations invest in compliance infrastructure that becomes a sunk cost, creating constituencies that favor regulatory stability over reform.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ See Cullen O’Keefe & Kevin Frazier, *Automated Compliance and the Regulation of AI*, INST. FOR L. & AI (Jan. 5, 2026), <https://law-ai.org/automated-compliance-and-the-regulation-of-ai> [<https://perma.cc/UDS8-UJKE>].

⁹⁶ Paul Ohm, *Toward Compliance Zero: AI and the Vanishing Costs of Regulatory Compliance*, NETWORK L. REV. (Summer 2025), <https://www.networklawreview.org/ohm-ai-regulation> [<https://perma.cc/V3DA-KVBP>] (arguing that near-zero compliance costs will remove a principal objection to new regulation and thereby encourage expansion of the regulatory state).

⁹⁷ See PAMELA HERD & DONALD P. MOYNIHAN, ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN: POLICYMAKING BY OTHER MEANS 15, 22–24 (2018) (defining compliance costs as material burdens imposed through administrative rules and analyzing how policy design choices determine their distribution between the state and citizens); Cass R. Sunstein, *Sludge and Ordeals*, 68 DUKE L.J. 1843, 1865–67 (2019) (recognizing that policymakers face unavoidable tradeoffs between program integrity and citizen access when determining the scope of compliance burdens).

⁹⁸ See George J. Stigler, *The Theory of Economic Regulation*, 2 BELL J. ECON. & MGMT. SCI. 3, 5 (1971) (arguing that industries with political power seek regulatory entry controls that benefit incumbents); see also James Broughel, *The Next Phase of Regulatory Reform*, NAT’L AFFAIRS (Summer 2022), <https://nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/the-next-phase-of-regulatory-reform> [<https://perma.cc/RZV8-S67R>] (noting that once compliance costs are sunk, existing firms resist deregulation because rules become barriers to competitors who have not yet borne those

Regulatory agencies staff up to administer complex regimes and resist simplification that would reduce their authority.⁹⁹ Legislators respond to perceived problems with new laws that layer additional requirements onto existing frameworks.¹⁰⁰ The legal profession, whatever its preferences about regulatory burden, handles the work these dynamics generate.

Environmental regulation provides an instructive parallel. Decades of efficiency improvements in pollution control technology have not reduced environmental regulatory complexity. Instead, as abatement technology improved and compliance costs fell, regulators responded with more stringent standards, broader pollutant coverage, and increasingly sophisticated compliance requirements.¹⁰¹ The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 were vastly more complex than the original 1970 statute despite, or because of, technological improvements that made compliance economically feasible.¹⁰² Legal work serving the environmental regulatory system has grown throughout this period.¹⁰³

CONCLUSION

The Jevons paradox offers a corrective to both utopian and dystopian visions of AI's future in legal practice. As Jevons observed in Victorian England, efficiency gains in resource use increase, rather than decrease, total consumption. AI will transform what kinds of work lawyers do, while expanding the total amount of legal work performed. This transformation

costs).

⁹⁹ WILLIAM A. NISKANEN, JR., *BUREAUCRACY AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT* 36–42 (1971) (arguing that bureaucrats maximize their agency's budget because salary, power, and perquisites all increase with budget size, creating structural incentives to expand bureaus rather than simplify or reduce them).

¹⁰⁰ Wolfgang Streeck & Kathleen Thelen, *Introduction* to *BEYOND CONTINUITY: INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN ADVANCED POLITICAL ECONOMIES* 1, 22–24 (Wolfgang Streeck & Kathleen Thelen eds., 2005) (describing “layering” as a mode of gradual institutional change in which new rules and requirements are attached to existing institutions rather than replacing them).

¹⁰¹ See generally Richard Schmalensee & Robert N. Stavins, *Policy Evolution Under the Clean Air Act*, 33 J. ECON. PERSPS. 27 (2019) (documenting that air pollution regulation has gradually become much more complex over the past fifty years, with successive amendments in 1977 and 1990 expanding coverage and tightening standards); see also U.S. EPA, *Evolution of the Clean Air Act*, <https://www.epa.gov/clean-air-act-overview/evolution-clean-air-act> [<https://perma.cc/Y989-G72Q>] (describing how the 1990 amendments substantially expanded federal authority, adding programs for acid rain, toxic air pollutants, and ozone protection).

¹⁰² See Curtis A. Moore, *The 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments: Silk Purse or Sow's Ear?*, 2 DUKE ENV'T. L. & POL'Y F. 26, 28 (1992) (noting that the 1990 amendments, at 328 pages, surpassed all prior federal environmental enactments in complexity and detail).

¹⁰³ See generally RICHARD J. LAZARUS, *THE MAKING OF ENVIRONMENTAL LAW* (2d ed. 2023) (documenting the expansion of environmental regulation at all levels of government since 1970 and the legal work it has generated).

creates obligations to ensure that AI efficiency gains serve justice rather than merely those who can afford sophisticated services, and opportunities to deploy those gains toward massive unmet legal needs that currently exclude most Americans from meaningful access to the legal system. The future of legal labor lies in transformation rather than scarcity. When we become more efficient at something valuable, we do more of it. Legal services are valuable, AI makes them more efficient, and we will therefore do more of them.