

# Daily Journal

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COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

**P**aul Llewellyn's path to California litigation began with a television set in England. As a child watching L.A. Law, he fixed on a career that seemed, at the time, logistically improbable.

"From about the age of 10, I had the dream of becoming a litigator in California — I just had no idea how I was going to make that happen," he said.

He found a way. Llewellyn began his legal career as a barrister in England, serving as a criminal prosecutor before relocating permanently to California in 2001. Now, more than 25 years into the pro-

fession, he said the work has held up against the fantasy.

"Fortunately, the reality has lived up to the dream," Llewellyn said.

His early years at the bar shaped a set of principles he has carried into his California practice. As a young barrister, he spent time in court observing veteran trial lawyers, an education he credits as foundational. The central lesson: preparation precedes persuasion.

"The most important lesson that stayed with me is that great advocacy begins long before you walk into the courtroom," he said. "If you know your case inside out — both the strengths and the weaknesses — you can stand up with confidence, adapt when things inevitably change, and focus on telling a clear and compelling story."

He has applied that approach across a range of high-profile matters. In one case, Llewellyn represented a private real estate network challenging a NAR rule that required agents to place off-market listings onto the MLS within one business day. *Top Agent Network, Inc. v. National Association of Realtors*, 3:20-cv-03198 (N.D. Cal., filed May 11, 2020).

After the Northern District dismissed the case, he obtained a reversal in the Ninth Circuit. The U.S. Department of Justice's Antitrust Division filed an amicus brief in support of the reversal.

On the plaintiff side, he represents eight women who allege sexual abuse by a physical therapist employed by Adventist Health in Sonora over a period of years.

The lawsuit contends that employees received complaints about the perpetrator, but took no corrective action. Trial is scheduled for May 2026 in Tuolumne County.

He also represents families of children secretly filmed by an American Airlines flight attendant in airplane bathrooms. The perpetrator pleaded guilty and is serving an 18-and-a-half-year federal prison sentence. Those cases are set for trial in Texas and North Carolina later this year.

"Those are often the cases worth bringing — the ones where the outcome matters beyond just the parties in the room and where the issues have broader implications for accountability and competition," he said.

Llewellyn is also watching a structural shift in how the profession prices its work. He sees the billable hour as a model under pressure — not because of rate levels, but because of what the model measures.

"The billable hour treats every six-minute increment the same, even though the reality of legal practice is very different," he said. "A short conversation or a well-crafted letter can change the trajectory of a case, while hours can be spent on tasks that add relatively little value."