Where You Live Is The Prompt

AI legislation is playing catch up. As countries create AI legislation covering privacy and deepfakes, scholars have not examined geography's role in figuring out one's AI rights you have and which legal protections apply where you live. That's why geography is the missing link that makes every other AI legal framework incomplete.

Even though it's the same AI technology, a geographic gap exists between Australia, the US and South Africa when it comes to AI lawsuits:

Australia: Hepburn Shire's Mayor Brian Hood threatened to sue ChatGPT after the AI falsely identified him as a criminal. This was the first time anyone in the world had threatened legal action against an AI company for defamation. Legal experts noted that Australian defamation law is plaintiff friendly; that means geography gave Mayor Hood legal options that plaintiffs in other countries simply don't have.[1]

United States: Mark Walters, a radio talk show host and Second Amendment advocate, launched a defamation suit against OpenAI in 2023. He claimed that Frederick Riehl, a journalist, used ChatGPT which produced false statements claiming that Walters was involved in embezzlement. In May 2025, the Superior Court of Gwinnett County, Georgia ruled in favour of OpenAI on two grounds. First, as a public figure, Walters had to demonstrate actual malice and he couldn't. Second, ChatGPT's disclaimer meant reasonable readers would know the output wasn't necessarily factual. Geography played a decisive role that gave OpenAI a legal shield that wouldn't hold in other countries.[2]

South Africa: At the moment, no South African court has ruled on AI defamation. Under existing South African defamation law, the outcome would likely be different from the US. Unlike the American approach, disclaimers are not considered magic words that cure defamatory speech. Once notified of defamatory or unlawful content, AI platforms would likely have a duty to act reasonably. Courts would examine the systems and processes AI companies have adopted and simply not whether a disclaimer existed.[3]

Same AI technology with three different legal outcomes.

Geography is the variable. Nobody in AI law is measuring it.

Geography shapes the legal outcomes, AI tools, products and stories.

Where you live is the prompt:

1) Matt Laubhan spent fourteen years as chief meteorologist for WTVA, a Mississippi TV station. When its owner tried to replace local forecasting with a centralized Weather Channel coverage, Laubhan built his own independent platform, Mississippi Live Weather, by joining the

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[1] Webber Wentzel, "Who Is to Blame When AI Defames?" (February, 2026), available at https://www.webberwentzel.com/News/Pages/who-is-to-blame-when-ai-defames.aspx

[2] Webber Wentzel, "Who Is to Blame When AI Defames?" (February, 2026) available at https://www.webberwentzel.com/News/Pages/who-is-to-blame-when-ai-defames.aspx

[3] Webber Wentzel, "Who Is to Blame When AI Defames?" (February. 2026), available at https://www.webberwentzel.com/News/Pages/who-is-to-blame-when-ai-defames.aspx

Digital Weather Network. Even after WTVA reversed its decision, Laubhan chose hyperlocal over centralized. His January 2026 ice storm coverage attracted 1.5 million viewers. As he said: "[n]o national entity is ever going to do better than what's happening right here." Geography determined whose forecast mattered.[4]

2) Indē Wild founder Diipa Büller-Khosla put it simply "[t]he way you introduce Ayurvedic beauty in the U.S. or UK might differ from how you communicate it in India." Same product. Different geographic prompt and story.[5]

3) Comcast uses Nvidia's GPUs to bring AI processing closer to its customers by creating video ads tailored to a viewer's language, household size and content preferences. Where you live determines which ad you'll see.[6]

Geography is the one thing these examples share and it determines these outcome: which forecast saved lives, which beauty story travelled globally and which ad reached your home. If geography shapes these outcomes in media and commerce, it can shape the legal outcome as well. Nowhere is that clearer than in the case of one artist, one geography, and the legislation her experience helped inspire.

SECTION IV: THE TAYLOR SWIFT CASE STUDY

In January 2024, AI generated deepfake images of Taylor Swift spread around the globe. At the time, no US federal law and very few state laws existed to protect her. Geography determined everything and offered almost nothing.

In March 2024, Tennessee signed the ELVIS Act (Ensuring Likeness, Voice and Image Security). Taking effect July 1st 2024, it was the first law that addressed the commercial uses of AI deepfakes. Not only does it target the creators who create the deepfakes without authorization,

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[4] Elizabeth Hewitt, "Meet the Meteorologists Leaving Broadcast Behind", Columbia Journalism Review (March 17, 2026) available at https://www.cjr.org/feature/meteorologists-leaving-broadcast-behind-extreme-indie-weathermen.php

[5] "From Rituals to Retail: How Diipa Khosla Scaled Indē Wild," Mediabrief (April 1, 2026), available at https://mediabrief.com/exclusive-how-diipa-khosla-scaled-inde-wild/

[6] "Comcast to Accelerate Next-Generation AI Applications Using NVIDIA Infrastructure at the Network Edge," Comcast Corporation (March 17, 2026), available at https://corporate.comcast.com/press/releases/comcast-nvidia-ai-network-edge-accelerate-next-generation-applications

but also the providers of the tools used to create them. Geography gave Tennesseans legal protection that most Americans still didn't have.[7]

In 2026, Missouri introduced The Taylor Swift Act that gave Missourians a path to sue when someone distributes AI generated sexual images without their consent. Different state. Different law. Same geographic lottery.[8]

At the US federal level, the NO FAKES Act (Nurture Originals, Foster Art, and Keep Entertainment Safe Act) was introduced in April 2025 to propose a national AI deepfake protection framework. In 2026 it hasn't been passed because its supporters acknowledge the bill must overcome a patchwork of existing state laws that has its own definition of deepfakes.[9]

Geography created the problem and it's making the solution harder.

SECTION V: THE GEOAI LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In US AI law, geography is the missing variable. A federal minimum standard should establish baseline protections for all Americans. States may build on that standard but not fall below it. And AI company disclaimers should not shield companies from liability where clear geographic legal standards exist. Critics may argue that VPNs and location masking undermine geographic enforcement but obscuring location is evidence of intent. Courts treat jurisdictional evasion as legally significant.

The Taylor Swift deepfake case shows why geography must become a legal variable in AI law. In January 2024 geography offered no protection. By 2026 it offers different protection depending on which state you live in. Under a proposed federal government framework, AI platforms would be required to apply the highest available geographic standard, whether it's at the federal or state level, to any deepfake content. Where no state law exists, the federal minimum applies. Where state law is stronger, state law prevails.

The Taylor Swift deepfake case revealed a geographic and legal gap. The conclusion is clear.

SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

Taylor Swift's AI deepfake situation proves that geography has a decisive role in AI legislation. In January 2024 no state or federal law existed. By 2024 Tennessee enacted the ELVIS Act. By 2026 more than 20 states have laws but Missouri, Alaska and Ohio still don't. At the federal level the NO FAKES Act remains pending.

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[7] Stuart D. Levi et al., "Tennessee Law Addresses Proliferation of Deepfakes," Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (Apr. 2, 2024), available at https://www.skadden.com/insights/publications/2024/04/tennessee-law-addresses-proliferation-of-deepfakes. https://www.skadden.com/insights/publications/2024/04/tennessee-law-addresses-proliferation-of-deepfakes

[8] Steph Quinn, "A Missouri Bill Named for Taylor Swift Targets Deepfakes and AI-Generated Sexual Content," KCUR (February 22, 2026), https://www.kcur.org/politics-elections-and-government/2026-02-22/missouri-taylor-swift-deepfakes-ai-images-sexual-content

[9] S. 1367, Nurture Originals, Foster Art, and Keep Entertainment Safe Act of 2025, 119th Cong. (introduced April. 9, 2025), available at https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/1367

Same AI technology. Different geographic protections depending on where you live. That's not a legal system. That's a geographic lottery.

Geography isn't the background.

Geography is the story.