

## **New Massachusetts "Voir Dire Law" Will Assist Injured Victims in Selecting an Impartial Jury**

*Massachusetts Trial Attorney Steven R. Whitman comments on the states new "Voir Dire Law" and how it will impact Injury cases.*

Boston, MA ([PRWEB](#)) August 19, 2014 -- Governor Duval Patrick recently signed into law legislation that would grant attorneys the power to question Superior Court jurors during impanelment of criminal and civil cases. (Bill 4123). This makes Massachusetts the 39th state to enact such a law. Prior to the law's passage, attorneys in civil cases were limited to a one page juror questionnaire in deciding whether a juror was acceptable. This would lead to much speculation and guess work on the part of the attorney in picking a prospective juror for the jury.

The process of questioning jurors before accepting them on a jury is known as "voir dire." This procedure allows lawyers to enter into a dialogue with the prospective jury pool to learn about any preconceived biases or misperceptions about either the facts of the case or their clients.

After looking over Bill 4123 attorney Whitman said, "Ultimately, this new law will assist injured victims in selecting an impartial jury. For many years, lawyers and their injured clients have been faced with jurors who have come to the court with a preconceived notion that all injured victims are somehow taking advantage of the system and therefore, in the long run, costing the jurors money as verdict for the plaintiff will increase a juror's insurance costs. Under the new voir dire law, more jurors with these misconceived ideas will be discovered and dismissed from the potential jury. Most people who have their legal claims resolved in court are expecting a fair and impartial jury, and this law goes a long way to establish that".

The new law also allows attorneys to request the jury to award a specific dollar sum for their client's pain and suffering injuries. Until passage of this new law, lawyers were precluded from requesting such a dollar sum leaving jurors to speculate as to what a proper award should be.

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