

6:00pm 7-14-09

Thank you all for coming to ProCon.org's 5th Anniversary. Our friends here today include Carrie Roberts and Phil Bruce of NPR (National Public Radio; two of our board members, Stanley Shimohara, and Jadwiga Markoff, who doubles as my wife.

My parents Morrie and Betty Markoff, Kamy Akhavan, our managing editor, his research team of 6 terrific researchers; Jodi Young, Javier Inda, Relic Sun, Jeff Hendricks, Monica Kline, Tracey Defrancesco, our IT mogul Marcus Hirn; Bruce McNall, my co-chairman in our unrelated film business and ProCon.org cheerleader and many other substantial friends, supporters and volunteers—including our two young adults, Thomas and Emily Markoff thrown in for good measure.

That said—here is a somewhat antiseptic recap of our last 5 years.

- 7-12-04 ProCon.org incorporation was certified by the State of California.
- 12-4-04 Kamy (Managing editor)
- 6-6-05 BBC referenced three of our sites in the US Supreme Court decision: Gonzales vs. Reich decision—ProCon.org was listed before DEA and NORML.
- 2-26-06 First radio interview, with WLPO in Oglesby, IL (a 23-minute interview)
- 6-22-06 We picked the winner of our logo contest, chosen from 166 logo submissions in 8 countries—the same logo we use today, the exploding mind with minor modifications.
- 7-27-07 The Congressional Research Service, a division of The Library of Congress in Washington D.C., referenced ProCon.org four times in its comprehensive report to Congress entitled: "Medical

Marijuana Review and Analysis of State and Federal policies.”

- 11-14-07 We received our first online donation of \$100.
- 4-17-08 We created our first popular “user survey.”
- 4-20-08 We had our Medical Marijuana and Nov. 2008 sites archived by The Library of Congress on April 20, 2008 as “Materials of Historical importance.”
- 5-7-08 ProCon.org surpassed 10m cumulative sessions.
- 2-12-09 We passed the 100 mark for the number of times we have been referenced in the media.
- 3-16-09 We put up our homepage in Spanish—in Spain.
- As of 6-30-09
 - Our site has over 1,000 questions with over 7,500 ProCon or not clearly pro or con statements.
 - Over 4,800 custom biographies.
 - Our content is used by over 500 schools—K through university, in 48 states and 14 countries.
- 7-14-09

I met this morning with Jack O’Connell, elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction, chief of CA’s public schools and head of the California Department of Education. Within 15 minutes of that 45 minute meeting ending, Superintendent O’Connell sent out two Tweets as follows:

“I just met with the founder of ProCon.org. It’s a great resource that breaks down hot button issues with quality, sourced info.”

“The best part about ProCon.org is the entire website is free to use. No ads, no registration necessary. If you’re in Ed. check it out.”

In summary, ProCon.org and its folks and supporters have broken and traveled much ground in the past 5 years—but if our vision of helping people understand and develop their critical thinking skills holds—our journey will have just begun.

Thank you so much for your support and trust.

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