

Dear ,

We have good news to share about our 5-year anniversary celebration, our medical marijuana website's new research, and the fact that California's highest elected education official, Jack O'Connell, made some wonderful public statements about ProCon.org. Read about all these recent highlights below.

Sincerely,  
Kamy Akhavan  
Managing Editor, ProCon.org

### 1. [California State Schools Chief Jack O'Connell Praises ProCon.org](#)

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell met with ProCon.org's founder Steve Markoff on July 14, 2009. After the meeting, California's highest elected education official Tweeted:

"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 web site is free to use. No ads, no registration necessary. If you're in ed, check it out."

He Tweeted about ProCon.org later that same day and referenced our website as a "quality resource for controversial issues" and included a direct link to the ProCon.org website.

### 2. [ProCon.org 5 Year Anniversary Party Photos](#)

Our 5-year anniversary celebration on July 14, 2009 was a big success. We held an open house and attendees included ProCon.org Board Members, volunteers, and alumni, as well as representatives from NPR (National Public Radio), Wilderness Conservancy, MWW Group (an international public relations firm), Anti-Doping Research Inc., the *Daily Breeze* (daily newspaper of the South Bay region of Los Angeles), the Drucker Institute (management institute based at Claremont Graduate University), A-Mark Entertainment (producers of *Alpha Dog*, *Camille*, *Next Day Air*, and other feature films), and more. Check out some photos from our 5-year anniversary celebration.

### 3. [Deaths from Marijuana vs. 17 FDA Approved Drugs](#)

ProCon.org used the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to acquire data from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on deaths from marijuana and 17 FDA approved drugs including Marinol, Vioxx, Viagra, Ritalin, and Lithium.

As CBS News wrote: "It found that the approved drugs -- which included anti-psychotics, Attention Deficit Disorder medications, painkillers and other

prescription drugs -- were suspected as the primary cause of 10,008 deaths and as a secondary cause in 1,679 more. Marijuana, on the other hand, was the primary suspect in zero deaths and a suspected secondary factor in 279 deaths."

Our "deaths from..." research attracted extensive media coverage in the last two weeks including CBS News, Digg, Daily Kos, Marijuana Policy Project, WKRG News 5 (Mobile, AL), WWJ Newsradio 950 (Detroit, MI), and elsewhere. The effect of all this publicity for our research resulted in Medical Marijuana ProCon.org receiving 36,637 sessions on July 3, 2009 - breaking our all-time record for number of sessions for a ProCon.org issue website in one day.

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