

Economics: A Christian Worldview – Short Film: Richard Ankrom’s L.A. Highway Sign

(TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY)

Purpose

This fascinating short film documents the 2001 efforts of one man to add a much-needed highway sign to an inefficient highway in Los Angeles.

Time

12-15 minutes

Instructions

1. Play the short film “**Richard Ankrom’s L.A. Highway Sign**” (8:39) for students:

<https://youtu.be/Q-3qvNn84Ac>

2. Tell students to discuss in pairs/groups their takeaways from this film.

3. Ask student volunteers for their thoughts. Then ask these questions:

- What would have happened if a private company owned the roads in this situation?

They surely would have added the sign long before Ankrom did, to please customers and make it easier to use their service/product.

- How long did it take the government to notice the sign? To replace the sign with an official, state-produced one?

Eight months; eight YEARS.

- What is your take on the comments made by bureaucrats at the end of the film?

AWW.

- What do you think is the lesson taught by this incident?

AWW, but clearly governments are not motivated to add badly needed fixes, because nobody owns the roads, and they are not really going to suffer for their lack of action like a profit-run business would.