

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
Short Films on the Fifth Amendment (12–15 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students review what the “general welfare” clause really means and review a case involving the Fifth Amendment’s giving government the power to take private property for so-called “public use.”

Instructions

1. Play the short film (2:17) titled “When Pulled Over, Plead the Fifth Amendment” here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-pMpEd372o>, and tell students to take notes.
2. Have students in pairs/groups discuss for 3–5 minutes, and then discuss as a class.
3. Play the short film (4:14) of reporter John Stossel’s story on eminent domain called “Little Pink House” here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=71WCLTGbfJ8>, and tell students to take notes.
4. Have students in pairs/groups discuss for 3–5 minutes, and then discuss as a class.

Debrief/Wrap-Up Questions

1. Can you think of any other ways that failing to take advantage of your Fifth Amendment right to remain silent could hurt you?
AWV, but anything you say, as the lawyer mentions in the video, can be twisted to mean or to look to mean something else, or something that makes you look guilty.
2. What is your take on the government bureaucrat’s attitude when John Stossel confronts him on his willingness to take away the homeowner’s home just to get more tax revenue?
AWV, but it’s unbelievably arrogant and dismissive of individual rights, and it shows that for all practical purposes, the government could claim to have a “need” for anybody’s property, even for reasons that turn out to be nonexistent, as the failure to build anything on Mrs. Kelo’s house shows.