



Incredulity Doesn't Cut It

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One of the objections people often make to the idea of private enterprise as a solution to government inefficiency is The Argument from Incredulity.

It's not an argument at all, actually, just a harrumph and a guffaw: we cannot have free-market police, or fire suppression, or . . . garbage collection!

But of course *all* those things *are* successfully managed in the private sector.

No media outfit has a longer history of pointing this out than *Reason* magazine. So when the editors of *Reason* brought us Joe Lancaster's "Government Waste Monopoly Pits Private Dumpster Business Against Garbage Bureaucrats," yesterday, I hope they took a moment to revel in a little nostalgia. For this is the kind of story that made *Reason* what it is today, one of the best sources for retail political economy.

The tale tells of Steven Hedrick, an Arkansas man who put together a business renting out dumpsters — like you often see on construction sites, but smaller — which he would haul away after customers filled them. He built the business without ever going into debt, and then . . . came the government.

"[I]n April 2022, the City Council in Holiday Island passed [Ordinance 2022-004](#), which required all residents and businesses within the city to contract with the county sanitation authority, Carroll County Solid Waste (CCSW), for trash pickup and disposal services," *Reason* informs us. "Anyone using private companies would have to switch, and anyone who did not have contracted trash service would have to sign up."

And Hedrick's little business must be . . . dumped.

What this is, at base? Sheer bigotry: preferring monopoly government to competitive private services.

For those of us who've been reading *Reason* for decades, it sports a familiar smell.

Just not a good odor, for the drive to [monopolize](#) everything stinks.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.