

SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE PROLIFERATION OF COMMERCIAL GAMBLING IN GHANA BY HONOURABLE DEREK OHENE ASSIFO BEKOE, MP FOR UPPER WEST AKIM - 16 MARCH, 2017

Mr Speaker, I am Derek Ohene Assifo Bekoe of Upper West Akim Constituency. Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to add my voice to the Statement made by the Hon Member. In fact, this issue of gaming is a major case of concern in our constituencies. This House would have to look at it and make decisions which would change the direction at which it is moving.

We are talking of education, education and education. We are finding ways to improve upon standards. But with the advent and emergence of this gaming in our various constituencies, it is directly affecting the performance of our children especially in the basic schools.

As a District Chief Executive in Upper West Akim, we conducted a survey and the Assembly made a move to stop this in the constituency. You can find these machines in every corner, in front of shops and we know that by the act of gaming, they are supposed to be in areas that are protected, of which children under 18 would not have access to participate in this gaming exercise.

But unfortunately, the adverse is the case. Mr Speaker, we can find these games all over this country. The owners come weekly and collect the moneys and nobody assesses the gains that they make in terms of profits and the taxes that they are supposed to pay. They are causing a lot of harm to our children. Mr Speaker, let us once again look at the Act. By looking at the Act, I know it protects children and there is a penalty to this, but unfortunately, the enforcement is not there. All over our communities, we have these games in all corners.

Are we building a nation? Are we trying to protect our children for the future? Mr Speaker, however, it is unfortunate to note that, if this House and the country as a whole should ignore this caution of regulating the gaming exercise, as the new emergence in our society, then we are fighting a lost battle when it comes to our education.

On this note, Mr Speaker, I would like to add my voice to let this House act and take very serious measures to this issue so that the trend could change for us to have a positive outcome in our educational sector.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.