

**SUPPORTING TRIBUTE TO PARLIAMENT IN MEMORY OF THE LATE JOSEPH HENRY OWUSU-ACHEAMPONG BY HONOURABLE KWASI AMEYAW-CHEREMEH, MP FOR SUNYANI EAST - 2 AUGUST, 2017**

I thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to comment on the tribute made in honour of the Late Hon Joseph Henry Owusu-Acheampong who passed to eternity some few weeks ago. Mr Speaker, the Hon Owusu Acheampong was a native of Berekum. In fact, as already alluded to, he came from Bidadan, one of the key communities of the Berekum Municipality. Being a native of Berekum, I knew him on a personal level.

In fact, he was a contemporary of my uncle. So, we used to visit him when he was a Regional Secretary for Brong Ahafo Region in those days. Anytime my uncle came to Sunyani, he took me along and we paid him a visit and I knew how friendly he was and the pieces of advice that he gave us as young people in those days.

Mr Speaker, before I exited the university, I became one of the leaders of the Brong Ahafo Students Union. I was the Vice President and we needed to liaise with the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) which was headed by the Hon J. H. Owusu-Acheampong and we never regretted having an interaction with him. He continued to serve as a mentor to us and he motivated and encouraged us anytime we had a meeting with him.

He also supported us immensely in the activities that we undertook as a students' group from the Brong Ahafo Region, especially so when we wanted to bring up many young people to enter the university from the Region. He gave us all the supported we needed and we have always been grateful to him.

Politically, Mr Speaker, I was very young in 1979 but we saw the political activities that went on in those days. Mr Speaker, he was the candidate of the Danquah-Busia Tradition, and the Popular Front Party candidate for the Berekum Constituency, which he won convincingly and entered Parliament. Mr Speaker, later on, when Parliament was proscribed after the 1981 coup d'etat, he subsequently became a member of the PNDC and was made the regional secretary for the Brong Ahafo Region. Later, he contested the Berekum Constituency seat and became the Hon Member of Parliament of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) for Berekum, and eventually the Hon Leader of the House. Much has been said about his political and leadership roles in and out of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, but when he exited Parliament after the 2000 elections, eventually, when the NDC won power in 2008 and assumed the reigns of Government in 2009, Hon J. H. Owusu Acheampong contested and won to represent the good people of the Brong Ahafo Region in the Council of State. So, between 2009 and 2013, he was our representative at the Council of State. Unfortunately, his attempt for reelection to represent the region at the Council of State was truncated because he lost by whatever means; fair or foul. He remained active in his political tradition, new found love, and supported them. He was opened to everybody even though everybody knew him to belong to the NDC. He still opened his arms and doors to those of us who

did not belong to his political tradition or did not share his vision or political philosophy, Today, if he is gone and we are paying him tribute, all that I can say is that the late Hon J. H. Owusu-Acheampong paid his dues as a family man, professional, politicians and a statesman. May he rest peacefully in the bosom of God. Mr Speaker, thank you.