

SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE ENFORCEMENT OF ROAD TRAFFIC AND MOTOR REGULATIONS BY HONOURABLE MAVIS NKANSAH-BOADU, MP FOR AFIGYA SEKYERE EAST, BY HON SARAH ADWOA SAFO, MP FOR DOME/KWABENYA - 10 FEBRUARY, 2017

Mr Speaker, I commend the Hon Member who made the Statement for such an insightful and well researched Statement.

Mr Speaker, we would all agree that road safety is an issue for both drivers and pedestrians in general.

Mr Speaker, the problem we have here in Ghana is not about legislation. The Hon Member who made the Statement enumerated the relevant legislation — Regulations as well as the Acts — which deal with road safety. So, we are well taken care off when it comes to regulating or legislating on the matter.

The problem we have as a country has to do with implementation and professing the necessary sanctions that ought to be given when such rules, laws and Regulations are contradicted.

Mr Speaker, in this case, we seem to be a bit relaxed on our laws, so, we have so much indiscipline on our roads. It is costing the nation precious lives. People could have avoided these accidents and deaths; but unfortunately, due to recklessness and disregard for their own lives, we see many of these deaths happening in this country.

Mr Speaker, my neighbouring constituency, Okaikoi North, has experienced a number of accidents on the N1 Double Carriage way.

The Hon Member for Okaikoi North (Mr Fuseini Issah) has made a number of Statements on this floor, calling on the general public to adhere to the footbridges that have been provided on these highways.

Mr Speaker, it is sad that it is only in this part of our world that we see people crossing highways and double carriage ways without pondering. One would wonder — It does not happen anywhere. Footbridges are provided where they could actually cross to the other side of the road, but they do not do that. Nobody is there to enforce it. Day in day out, a lot of people lose their lives.

Mr Speaker, again, we could also look at regulating and ensuring that drivers' licences that are given out are done in a proper way.

Mr Speaker, I remember when I had to study in the United States of America, and I had to procure a driver's licence in the State of Virginia, I had then finished my first degree. I wrote the road test for about five times before I got my licence. So, one knows everything one ought to know on the roads before one is given the licence. This is because one's life and that of others are at stake.

Mr Speaker, we do not say that we should subject Ghanaians to that rigorous way of testing; but at least, there should be some test.

We should do away with “Goro Boys” at the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Authority (DVLA), who approach people and take moneys from them to procure drivers’ licences for them without testing if they are actually qualified to sit behind a steering wheel.

Mr Speaker, the more we relax our rules, the more lives we are going to lose as a country.

I agree with the Hon Minority Leader when he talked about the closed-circuit television cameras. There should be Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements to get the private sector to partner the security agencies to get these things on our roads.

Mr Speaker, if one knows that if he or she jumps a red light and the camera would capture him or her, and the next minute he or she is made to pay a fine or serve a prison term, it would serve as a deterrent to many of our road users who have flouted our rules and regulations relating to that.

Mr Speaker, the Hon Majority Leader is asking me how we are going to even locate these people. This is because we do not have an address system. How do we track these people? It is a major concern which has been raised.

The process for street naming started in our country, but it has not been completed. Many of our streets are not named. So, locating — We usually use the ‘waakye seller at the junction’, and then one is directed to take left turn and spot a mango tree. That is the usual way of directing people to our residences and places of work.

Mr Speaker, I believe that as we push for reforms and enforcement of these laws, we should also look at developing our street naming system to ensure that, as we push for the enforcement, there is an enabling environment for whoever is to enforce the law to be able to do so.

Mr Speaker, with these few words, I would want to commend the Hon Member who made the Statement.

I thank you for the opportunity.