SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON TIME TO REFORM AND DECENTRALISE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOLARSHIPS SECRETARIAT BY HONOURABLE FRANK ANNOH-DOMPREH, MP FOR NSAWAM-ADOAGYIRI, BY HON. JAMES K. AVEDZI, MP FOR KETU NORTH - 5 APRIL, 2017

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I would like to make a few comments. The Hon Member who made the Statement, proposed that a Bill be introduced immediately to govern the operations and activities of the Scholarships Secretariat.

Mr Speaker, in view that other institutions are also awarding scholarships, I think it would be proper that a Bill is introduced to regularise and make sure that all those institutions which are giving scholarships are put under one administrative body.

The Hon Member who made the Statement also proposed that as part of plans to amend the current Local Governance Act, plans be put in place to include clauses that would ensure the introduction of a decentralised system in the administration of scholarships, in order to enhance easy access.

The main reason for this proposal is that the applicants or citizens who want this facility, could easily have access to this facility at the regional, municipal or district levels.

This means that the cost of access in terms of what currently goes on, where applicants have to travel from their various regions and districts to Accra, would be decentralised. If we do that, it means that we are rather decentralising the cost to Government.

So, we should think about the financial impact on our Budget. If we have a decentralised system, where we are going to have personnel to man those bodies at the district level, it would be a cost to Government.

What should be the choice? Do we centralise cost to Government to bear or maintain a system where individual applicants also bear a little cost in its administration?

That is the only angle that I would want to look at. Even if we would want to do that — I agree with what the Hon Member for North Tongu said, that with technology, the headquarters could still be in Accra and applicants could have access to these facilities in the various regions and districts, and do not necessarily have to travel to Accra.

If we would want to decentralise, physical decentralisation would bring cost to the Government, but if we can do this decentralised administration through technology, it would help us.

Mr Speaker, I thank you very much.