SUPPORTING STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE NEED TO WEAR SEAT-BELTS TO SAVE LIVES
BY HONOURABLE OSEI KYEI-MENSAH-BONSU, MAJORITY LEADER AND MP FOR SUAME - 6 JULY, 2017

Mr Speaker, I believe that the Hon Member for Adaklu is not saying that he does not understand the meaning of rear as any seat behind the driver’s seat — it is either the front seats or the back seats. Mr Speaker, so, he understands this perfectly, but he is only drawing attention that, perhaps, we should have been clearer in defining what constitutes rear seats. He understands and appreciates it, but he is telling us that his constituents at Adaklu have a problem — That perhaps, may include pedestrians at Kejetia and not Suame, because the people of Suame are vehicular artisans and they understand the terminology.

Mr Speaker, but I believe that, the Hon First Deputy Speaker hit the nail right on its head when he blamed us, the politicians in particular, even though we are not the only sinners as far as this matter is concerned. Mr Speaker, I believe that squarely, the burden should be laid on the shoulders of politicians and the police who are also to insist on the right thing to be done; and I would even dare to include the DVLA. I include the DVLA because the issue that the Hon First Deputy Speaker related to, had to do with vehicles in the system at the time — lots of vehicles or trucks that are converted for the use of passengers.

Mr Speaker, it is for them to insist on the right thing to be done — that after the conversion, the seats that they installed in the vehicles are provided with seat belts. It is for the DVLA to ensure that before they grant them the licenses, but they do not ensure that. So, let us rope all of them in — the DVLA, the Ghana Police Service, the politicians and all those who are highly placed, who after people have been caught for offences, troop to the police stations to plead for them and sometimes even go behind the curtains to plead with Judges.

Mr Speaker, if we would have to come to some reasonable consensus on this, then the issue that he raised, that if a Statement is made in this House, maybe, by the Hon Minority Leader or the Hon Majority Leader and supported ably by the Hon Minority Leader or vice versa, we would carry the entire nation with us. Let nobody endeavour to reap where he had not sown and associate with the drivers whenever they are called to do what is right. Mr Speaker, this Statement was made on account of ensuring that seat belts are worn but I noticed that Hon Colleagues have really digressed into other areas. They talked about drivers driving and talking on telephones. They are not really relevant on the subject matter; but to the extent that they are concerned with the protection of life and property, I guess you would be accommodating enough to allow for that.

Mr Speaker, yes, we could also talk about the training of the drivers themselves, the people who are behind the driving wheels. The comprehension of road signs by many of them is suspicious. There are drivers plying our roads whose eyesight, are not in the best of shapes. Elsewhere, every year, drivers would be called upon to have their eyes examined to see whether their sight is proper or defective, but we do not do that. They are required to do so every two years, but
whether they do so is another matter. Who ensures that? In the renewal of licences, they are required to do that; but how many of them do that? And who sees to the compliance of the drivers? Mr Speaker, we know that people sit in their bedrooms and acquire licences. People sit in their bedrooms and have their licences renewed for them.

So, it is a holistic problem that we have, as a nation. Let us be bold enough to confront the reality. If, perhaps, we would have to look at the parent Act, which this House crafted in 2004 again, so be it, in order for us to be more stringent in the application of the law. Mr Speaker, also, with regard to the Legislative Instrument (L.I.) that came before us in 2012, are there any defects that perhaps, if we tightened the bolt, people would not escape through any window? Mr Speaker, as I said, the burden is on all of us; politicians, the DVLA, the Police and senior Statesmen in this country, including all manner of people whom I shudder to identify in this course of presentation because it may be misconstrued that I am talking about chiefs, imams and pastors.

We are talking about former highly placed public servants and so on. I have not mentioned them; but if I have to mention them, these are, perhaps, some of the names I may mention; but I have not mentioned them.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity granted.