

YMCA YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Statement by Minister for Youth

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Youth) [9.09 am]: I rise to inform members that applications for the YMCA Youth Parliament are now open until Sunday, 22 March. I urge all members to encourage young people in their electorates between the ages of 15 and 25 to apply and be a voice for their community. Participants learn about writing legislation and speeches and will present their bills while role-playing in Parliament House during a week-long camp. The program aims to educate, empower and encourage young people to take an active role in their community by advocating the views of their electorate at a state level. A high level of political engagement is not necessary. We want every young person who wants their voice to be heard to apply and have a go. I, for one, look forward to meeting what I am sure will be a talented and motivated group of young people, some of whom would definitely give some members in this house a run for their money.

Youth Parliament is a fantastic opportunity for young people to comment on government policy and make recommendations to the government on the change young people want to see. School-age children who participate in the program can have their participation count towards their Western Australian Certificate of Education by recording it with the Curriculum Council. I once again encourage all members to promote this great initiative. It is a fantastic hands-on way to learn about the political process and what it is like to be a politician.