Bayside Youth Parliament marks International Year of Youth

Students from Brisbane's Bayside and Springwood areas today participated in a special Youth Parliament to mark the United Nations' International Year of Youth.

Speaker John Mickel opened the Bayside Youth Parliament which was held at Sheldon College and facilitated by the Queensland Parliament.

Students debated a motion calling for the introduction of a common age of 21 years to apply to drinking, driving and voting in Queensland.

Mr Mickel congratulated the students on the quality of their speeches and the debate.

“I’m heartened to see the level of debate and the passion and conviction demonstrated by the students participating in the Bayside Youth Parliament today.

“I heard good, strong arguments across the board on the motion of whether a single age of majority of 21 years should be adopted for drinking, driving and voting in Queensland,” Mr Mickel said.

Following the debate on this motion, students participated in an Adjournment Debate where they delivered speeches on any issue or matter of interest to them.

Mr Mickel noted that the Bayside Youth Parliament was an innovative event in that all previous Youth Parliaments in the Greater Brisbane area had been held at Parliament House in Brisbane.

“While the parliament has held Youth Parliaments in regional areas of Queensland, the Bayside Youth Parliament is the first time where the parliament has facilitated such an activity at a school in the Greater Brisbane area.

“I am very keen for other schools across Queensland to adopt the Youth Parliament model that has been established here at Sheldon College today and use this to operate future Youth Parliament events,” Mr Mickel said.

The Bayside Youth Parliament concluded with a question and answer panel where the participating students were able to question Mr Mickel on his roles and responsibilities as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

Three other Members of Parliament – Michael Choi, Member for Capalaba, Peter Dowling, Member for Redlands and Mark Robinson, Member for Cleveland – also participated in the question and answer panel after having earlier chaired sessions of the debate.

On 18 December 2009, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the year commencing on 12 August 2010 as the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding.