Minister for Young Territorians Peter Styles has welcomed the news that Parliament House will this week host Youth Parliament for the first time since 2008.

The YMCA Youth Parliament NT (YPNT) will formally commence sittings today and Mr Styles said the program encouraged participants aged 13-25 to engage with community issues as youth representatives in an apolitical environment.

“The Youth Parliament NT has created an important link for young Territorians to convey issues of concern to the Northern Territory Government,” he said.

“This is such an invaluable opportunity for our young, aspiring Territorians to learn about Parliament and start thinking about the future,” he said.

Mr Styles said there were 16 participants of the Youth Parliamentarians who will be debating a series of bill topics that they have identified as important issues facing young Territorians.

“Some of the topics will include; Youth Suicide Prevention, Firework Safety, Student Absenteeism, Remote Service Funding, Teenage Vehicle Accidents and Youth Boredom,” Mr Styles said.

The week long program includes learning and development opportunities for participants, time for researching and team building, ahead of the two formal sitting days.

Formal YPNT sittings will be held on Tuesday 9 July and Thursday 11 July.

Mr Styles said bills passed during the Youth Parliament sittings would be handed to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly at the official Closing Ceremony.

“I commend the members of the Youth Parliament for all the hard work they have done so far, and for the commitment and forethought they have had to be involved in this program,” he said.

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