Chair Abinsay, Vice Chair Tsuji, Chair Morita, Vice Chair Evans, and Members of the Committees:

The purpose of the bill is to make appropriations to eradicate and control the coqui frog.

I support SB2417 SD2. Invasive species threaten Hawai‘i’s unique plants and animals. Many invasive pests also hurt agricultural operations by damaging crops, lowering crop yields, or spreading diseases. Limiting the spread of invasive species is crucial to protecting Hawai‘i’s environment and farmers.

In Hawai‘i, the coqui frog has no predators and reaches population densities three to four times greater than in its native Puerto Rico. It eats insects and spiders, putting native and endemic prey species at risk. It competes with native birds for food. The male’s loud, shrill mating call disrupts human activities, including sleep. The coqui frog also adversely impacts our nursery industry. Because the transportation of potted plants can spread the frogs to new locations, plants must be disinfested before they can be shipped, which is an added cost to the industry. Controlling established coqui frog populations and eradicating smaller populations before they get too large will benefit our environment, communities, and businesses.

For these reasons, I support SB2417 SD2.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.