



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 2, 2018**

**Cooke Aquaculture Pacific responds to Washington State  
Legislature's passage of HB 2957**

**(OLYMPIA, Washington)** Cooke Aquaculture Pacific's Vice President of Public Relations, Joel Richardson, provided the following response after the Legislature approved House Bill 2957 today and referred it to Gov. Jay Inslee's desk for signature:

"We are deeply disappointed in the action taken by the Legislature today and the potential impact it could have on Washington's 30-year salmon-farming industry and the more than 600 rural workers and their families that rely upon salmon farming for their livelihoods. Our employees remain our top priority, and we wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the many lawmakers who have consistently advocated on their behalf during this process.

"As an immediate next step, Cooke Aquaculture Pacific will take the time we need to fully evaluate our operations and investments in Washington and explore all our available options, ensuring that any decision we ultimately make places our employees and their families first.

"Cooke came to Washington as a global industry leader with the goal of being a valued and responsible partner here. We had planned to add significant capital investments on top of the \$75-plus million contribution we made to Washington's economy when we acquired the state's existing net-pen facilities 2016. We had also planned for additional investments in continued scientific monitoring of Puget Sound's waterways, and in state and tribal efforts to protect and recover wild salmon runs.

"We know that we have work to do with our state, tribal and community partners to rebuild public confidence and demonstrate the value that our industry brings to Washington and the world. We remain committed to supporting Washington's community, economy and marine ecology. And we will do so with a deep respect for the value and importance of native salmon to Washingtonians in general, and to the heritage, identity and culture of the Northwest Treaty Tribes in particular.

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