State. The U.S. software industry employs more than 600,000 people and enjoys an annual growth rate of 10 percent.

The industry paid more than $36 billion in wages to U.S. employees in 1996. Software and high-tech companies have been the driving force behind the economic expansion that we continue to experience here in the United States, and much of our economic future lies in these knowledge-based industries. We have to be cautious and thoughtful about Government intervention so that we do not stifle the economic promise that software and high-tech companies offer.

Of course, we should not protect companies or guarantee profits and market share. But we—as legislators and as the Federal Government—must be careful to correctly interpret the state of competition. My own view is competition is alive in this industry. Any tech company that rests on its current product line or stock price risks a quick and decisive downfall.

While Microsoft is headquartered in Redmond, WA, my remarks are more than a defense of a constituent company. My concerns should be felt by every Senator on this floor.

A recent piece in the Wall Street Journal offered the following passage:

> Dominant firms are the norm in high tech. TV ads boast that virtually all internet traffic travels on Cisco systems. Quicken has 80 percent of the financial-software market. Netscape once boasted of having 90 percent of the browser business. Intel still has 76 percent of the microprocessor business. America Online, Lotus Notes and Oracle all dominate their respective markets. Executives who work in such glass offices should think twice before encouraging zealous prosecutors and gullible reporters to define monopoly as a large share of an artificially tiny market.

The high-tech industry employs 4.5 million workers across this country. According to the American Electronics Association, 47 of the 50 States added high-tech workers between 1994 and 1996. It is not just States such as Washington and California and Texas that are booming as a result of technology jobs. Georgia, Colorado, North Carolina, Oregon, Illinois, Virginia, Florida, and Utah are States that are experiencing phenomenal job growth in the tech sector.

To maintain this impressive nationwide job growth in the technology sector, the Congress and the Federal Government must be careful. Let's not forget that most of this phenomenal growth occurred over the last decade when technology was not on either the Federal or congressional radar screen.

Before yielding, let me reiterate the points that brought me to the floor today. I hope each of my colleagues will give serious consideration to these issues.

Microsoft is a true Washington State and American success story that is still unfolding for the benefit of consumers, business and the general public. Microsoft has a particularly impressive record of community activism, and I am especially proud of the company's efforts in the area of education.

The ongoing court case is of utmost interest and importance to me in the work I do in the Senate. I implore all parties to give the legal system an opportunity to work. Judge Jackson has urged both parties to seek a settlement, and I strongly encourage them to heed the judge's advice.

Finally, the outcome of the Microsoft case will have long-term ramifications on our Nation's economy. Technology is growing rapidly, and we all know many technology jobs are high-paying, family-wage jobs. The United States is a technology superpower. The Federal Government must use its immense powers with care and caution in monitoring the technology sector. When the Federal Government interjects itself in this intensely competitive sector of our economy, it must ensure that it does not do serious damage to our economy.

Mr. President, I again urge my colleagues to pay attention to the Microsoft case. I look forward to discussing this issue with my colleagues again on the floor of the Senate.

EDUCATION AND CLASS SIZE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, while I have the floor, I want to turn quickly to a different topic, and that is on the issue of education and class size.

I know my colleagues have watched me come to the floor and talk numerous times about how important it is that we reduce class sizes in the grades of 1 through 3. I have talked about the research in this country which has shown that reducing class size makes a difference for our students.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD a report from Tennessee that has just come out. It is called the Star Report.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Project STAR News]

BENEFITS OF SMALL CLASSES PAY OFF AT GRADUATION

PROJECT STAR FINDS SMALL CLASSES IN K–3 LINKED TO GREATER STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, BETTER GRADES, LOWER DROPOUT RATES, AND HIGHER COLLEGE ASPIRATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A ground-breaking Tennessee-based class size study has found that public school students placed in small classes in grades K–3 continue to outperform students in larger classes right through high school graduation.

Researchers for Project STAR (Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio)—whose earlier findings helped form the basis for class size reduction in some 20 states—today reported that students placed in small class sizes in grades K–3 have better high school graduation rates, higher grade point averages, and are more inclined to pursue higher education.

''This research adds to the evidence we have compiled over the past 14 years,'' said Dr. Helen Pate-Bain, who convinced the Tennessee state legislature to provide funding for the initial STAR research. ''The project's findings indicate that students placed in small classes in grades K–3 continue to benefit from that experience in grades 4–12.''

The original STAR research tracked the progress of an average of 6,500 students each year in 79 schools between 1985 and 1989 (and 11,600 students overall). It found that children who attended small classes (13–17 pupils per teacher) in kindergarten through grade 3 outperformed students in larger classes (22–25 pupils) in both reading and math on the Stanford Achievement Test for elementary students. The second phase of the STAR research found that even after returning to larger classes in grade 4, STAR's small class students continued to outperform their peers who had been in larger class sizes.

At a news conference held today at the National Press Club, STAR researchers released a new wave of findings:

Students in small classes are more likely to pursue college: STAR students who attended small classes—and black students in that group in particular—were more likely to take the ACT or SAT college entrance exams, according to Princeton University economist Dr. Alan B. Krueger, who researched test data linked to the Project STAR database. ''Attendance in small classes appears to have cut the black-white gap in the probability of taking college-entrance exam by more than half,'' Krueger said.

Small classes lead to higher graduation rates: Preliminary data from participating STAR school districts in Tennessee show that students in small classes were more likely to graduate on schedule; they were less likely to drop out of high school; and they were more likely to graduate in the top 25% of their classes, according to Dr. Jayne Boyd-Zaharias, a STAR researcher since 1986. In addition. Boyd-Zaharias found that small class students graduated with higher grade point averages (GPAs) than regular class size students.

Students in small classes achieve at higher levels: Three other reearchers—Dr. Jeremy D. Finn, professor of education at SUNY Buffalo, Susan B. Gerber of SUNY Buffalo, and Charles M. Achilles, Ed.D., of Eastern Michigan University, together with Boyd-Zaharias—released new findings showing that STAR students who attended small classes in grades K–3 were between 6 and 13 months ahead of their regular-class peers in math, reading, and science in each of grades 4, 6, and 8. ''Our analyses show that at least three years in a small class are necessary in order for the benefits to be sustained through later grades,'' wrote the researchers. ''Further, the benefits of having been in a small class in the primary years generally increase from grade to grade.''

Class size is different from pupil/teacher ratio: Achilles, one of the original STAR researchers, explained the difference between class size (the number of students assigned to a teacher) and pupil/teacher ratio (the total number of students divided by the total number of educators in a school). Many ''class size'' studies, he noted, have relied on pupil/teacher ratios to make their case. The STAR research is able to track students based on specific class size. Achilles noted that some 20 states—including Michigan, California, Nevada, Florida, Texas, Utah, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Oklahoma, Iowa, Minnesota, Massachusetts, South Carolina, and Wisconsin—have initiated or considered STAR-like class size reduction efforts.

Teachers who taught small classes in Project STAR support the program strongly.

''All educators instinctively know that the smaller the class size, the more individual attention a teacher can provide a student,'' said Sandy Heinrich, a teacher at Granbery Elementary School in Davidson County, Tenn., who taught first grade in the STAR program in 1986. ''The more individual attention per student, the more learning and personal growth each student can enjoy. I was

fortunate enough to witness this notion first-hand.''

The STAR research is the only large-scale, long-term class size research of its kind. Dr. Frederick Mosteller, a professor of mathematical statistics at Harvard University, said this about STAR in 1995: ''Because a controlled education experiment (as distinct from a sample survey) of this quality, magnitude, and duration is a rarity, it is important that both educators and policymakers have access to its statistical information and understand its implications.''

In fact, the STAR research provided support for federal legislation that proposes to reduce class sizes by hiring 100,000 new teachers in grades K–3 nationwide.

Last fall, Congress appropriated $1.2 billion in the FY 1999 federal budget as a ''down-payment'' on that legislation, enough to hire approximately 30,000 teachers for one year. Future funding will require congressional authorization and additional annual appropriations. Pate-Bain was scheduled to share the new STAR findings with a number of education policy experts and Members of Congress later in the day.

Mrs. MURRAY. This is a report about a study that researchers in Tennessee began many years ago in relation to reduced class size in the first through third grades. They followed those young people all the way through to the point where they are now graduating this year.

It is a very impressive study. It shows exactly what I have been debating on the floor of the Senate; and that is that students who are in smaller class sizes in the first through third grades are more likely to pursue college, have higher graduation rates, they achieve at higher levels, and it makes a difference in discipline.

Mr. President, it seems to me that we have to get back to this issue. I urge all of my colleagues to take a second look and recognize that we can make a difference by continuing our support of class size reduction and teacher training here in the Senate.

I ask unanimous consent that the 23 Senators on the list that I send to the desk be added as cosponsors to my bill, S. 564, the Class Size Reduction and Teacher Quality Act of 1999.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, more than 15 years ago, Congress directed the Department of Energy (DOE) to take responsibility for the disposal of nuclear waste created by commercial nuclear power plants and our nation's defense programs. Today, there are more than 100,000 tons of spent nuclear fuel that must be dealt with. Over a year has now passed since the DOE was absolutely obligated under the NWPA of 1982 to begin accepting spent nuclear fuel from utility sites. Today DOE is no closer in coming up with a solution. This is unacceptable. This is in fact wrong—so say the Federal Courts. The law is clear, and DOE must meet its obligation. If the Department of Energy does not live up to its responsibility, Congress will act.

I am encouraged that Congressmen BLILEY, BARTON, UPTON, and the rest of the House of Representatives have begun to address this issue. It is good to see a bipartisan effort for a safe, practical and workable solution for America's spent fuel storage needs. The proper storage of spent fuel is not a partisan issue —it is a safety issue. The solution being advanced is certainly more responsible than just leaving waste at 105 separate power plants in 34 states all across the nation. There are 29 sites which will reach their storage capacity by the end of this year.

Where is DOE? Where is the solution? All of America's experience in waste management over the last twenty-five years of improving environmental protection has taught Congress that safe, effective waste handling practices entail using centralized, permitted, and controlled facilities to gather and manage accumulated waste.

Mr. President, the management of used nuclear fuel should capitalize on this knowledge and experience. Nearly 100 communities have spent fuel sitting in their ''backyard,'' and it needs to be gathered and accumulated. This lack of a central storage capacity could very possibly cause the closing of several nuclear power plants. These affected plants produce nearly 20% of America's electricity. Closing these plants just does not make sense.

Nuclear energy is a significant part of America's energy future, and must remain part of the energy mix. America needs nuclear power to maintain our secure, reliable, and affordable supplies of electricity. Nuclear power, at the same time, allows the nation to directly and effectively address increasingly stringent air quality requirements.

Both the House and the Senate passed a bill in the 105th Congress to require the DOE to build this interim storage site in Nevada, but unfortunately this bill didn't complete the legislative process because of time constraints. We ran out of time. I challenge my colleagues in both chambers of the 106th Congress to get this environmental bill done. The citizens, in some 100 communities where fuel is stored today, challenge the Congress to act and get this bill done. The nuclear industry has already committed to the federal government about $15 billion toward building the facility. In fact, the nuclear industry continues to pay about $650 million a year in fees for storage of spent fuel. It is time for the federal government to honor its commitment to the American people and the power community. It is time for the federal government to protect those 100 committees.

To ensure that the federal government meets its commitment to states and electricity consumers, the 106th Congress must mandate completion of this program—a program that includes temporary storage, a site for permanent disposal, and a transportation infrastructure to safely move used fuel from plants to the storage facility.

Mr. President, this federal foot dragging is unfortunate and unacceptable. Clearly, the only remedy to stopping these continued delays is timely action in the 106th Congress on this legislation. By moving this process, which must also include the work of the Senate, the House's work can be improved. Let's move forward and get this bill done.

COMMENDING ABHISHEK GUPTA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to praise the outstanding accomplishments of a distinguished young man from Florida. At the age of 17, Abhishek Gupta has succeeded in making a greater contribution towards the alleviation of pain and suffering on a global scale than most people can boast of in a lifetime. Last November, Abhishek organized 9 other students and initiated a project designed to provide humanitarian relief to underprivileged citizens in his Southern Florida community and throughout the world.

In a rare exemplification of compassion and determination, Abhishek, a junior at Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, created a non-profit organization called ''Clothes, Food and Education for the Poor and Needy.'' Drawing on Abhishek's inspiration, this group worked toward the goal of raising $50,000 to provide crucial relief for numerous families about whom Abhishek had read in several local newspaper articles.

Abhishek went to work lobbying corporate sponsors to pay for operational expenses, and entreating members of his community to help him meet his goal. Ultimately, he exceeded his own expectations by raising $60,000 in a matter of weeks. He channeled this money toward helping impoverished children in Southern Florida and victims of Hurricane Mitch in Central America.

Mr. President, I have always believed that the most effective way to give charity is to give time—money comes second. I want to stress that Abhishek did not only formulate the infrastructure for raising such a lofty sum, he also spent part of his Christmas vacation accompanying a medical team to Honduras and Nicaragua in order to contribute personally. During his week in Central America, Abhishek helped administer food, clothing and medical supplies to the disaster victims, and