To Whom it May Concern:
I would like to join my voice with those in opposition to applying the patent system broadly to software. As a programmer and entrepreneur the current software patent system is simply broken. Instead of fostering innovation, software patents are artificially creating barriers—barriers that are disproportionately affecting smaller companies. It is these same small companies where we have any hope of job creation in today's economy. In addition to the practical implications of software patents, there are serious fundamental questions regarding the entire thinking behind software patents. As a much smarter Computer Scientists wrote to the PTSO:

"Congress wisely decided long ago that mathematical things cannot be patented. Surely nobody could apply mathematics if it were necessary to pay a license fee whenever the theorem of Pythagoras is employed. The basic algorithmic ideas that people are now rushing to patent are so fundamental, the result threatens to be like what would happen if we allowed authors to have patents on individual words and concepts. Novelists or journalists would be unable to write stories unless their publishers had permission from the owners of the words. Algorithms are exactly as basic to software as words are to writers, because they are the fundamental building blocks needed to make interesting products. What would happen if individual lawyers could patent their methods of defense, or if Supreme Court justices could patent their precedents?"

- Donald Knuth

Regards,
Tim Ritchey