From: Timothy Ritchey [e-mail redacted]
Sent: Monday, September 27, 2010 3:10 PM
To: Bilski_Guidance
Subject: Software Patents

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