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To: Bilski_Guidance
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Subject: Feedback on Bilski v. Kappos

To the USPTO and all involved with guiding software patent applications.

As a software developer and a student, I know I speak on behalf of all young software developers when I say that the restrictions put on everyone by software patents greatly affect the work that we do now and future projects we hope to pursue. A single software patent creates an unnecessary hurdle for free software developers to create or modify software to meet their needs- it stops them from even trying.

The consequences of broadly stroked and cryptic software patents trickle down to the individual developers, making them a target for patent holders who aim to abuse their patents with lawsuits and expensive licensing just to include otherwise common and even trivial features.

In a world where we utilize computers to communicate, connect, solve problems, make art, and support our livelihood, we cannot afford to let software patents restrict the ability to exploit and improve software freely. A world where software patents threaten and extinguish software innovation is not a conducive or nurturing place for our students to study, play, and tinker with technology of the future.

More narrow boundaries on the scope of software patents should be drawn than have been done so in the past. The machine-or-transformation test should not be the sole test for drawing those boundaries. The USPTO can, and should, exclude software from patent eligibility on other legal grounds: because software consists only of mathematics and algorithms, which is not patentable, and the combination of such software with a general-purpose computer is obvious.

Thank you
-Brandon Runyon