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Sent: Sunday, September 26, 2010 12:58 AM
To: Bilski_Guidance; [e-mail redacted]
Subject: Stop Issuing Software Patents.

Please stop issuing software patents. Software is always a method, not an invention and method patents are harmful.

As clever as software may be, it can never be more than a method. Software simply tells a computer what to do and there are always other ways to accomplish the same thing. At best, software implements complicated math and a computer can do this faster and better than most other methods. The same result, however, can be obtained by any combination of computer language, operating system and hardware. The method might also be reproduced by people reading tables or mechanical contraptions.

As a free software user, engineer and physicist, I see the harm clearly. It is difficult to write software that does not infringe on one or another of the many vague patents non practicing entities and less ethical non free software companies have tried to claim as their own. Often these patents are rejected in court but the threat of litigation has a stifling effect on everyone who uses computers. Free software, such as gnu/linux, has shown that a cooperative approach to software works better than proprietary development and government monopoly grants.

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