

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
10 August 2017 (10.08.2017)



(10) International Publication Number
WO 2017/136743 A8

(51) International Patent Classification:
H01L 21/673 (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2017/016534

(22) International Filing Date:
03 February 2017 (03.02.2017)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
62/292,055 05 February 2016 (05.02.2016) US

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,

AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DJ, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IR, IS, JP, KE, KG, KH, KN, KP, KR, KW, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SA, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, ST, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, KM, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(48) Date of publication of this corrected version:
08 November 2018 (08.11.2018)

(54) Title: CUSHION RETAINER FOR SUBSTRATE CONTAINER

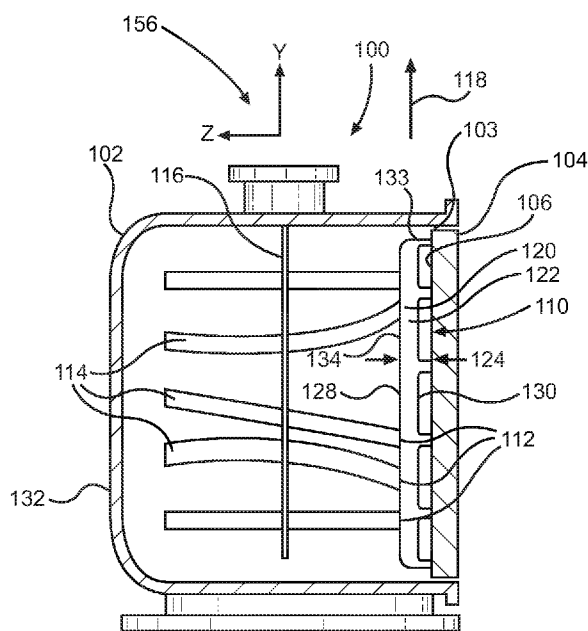


FIG. 2A

(57) Abstract: A substrate retainer (110) is provided which presents a substantially uniform contact face (128) that can accommodate a large variation in the location of substrate registration thereon. The uniform contact face (128) is allowed to deflect and compress in order to eliminate the prospect of substrates (114) being damaged by or becoming inadvertently pinched within the substrate retainer (110) or from being pressed too hard by the uniform contact face (128). With this arrangement, no adhesives or tapes are utilized, so there is no attendant out gassing of volatile organic compounds to contaminate the microenvironment, or complications due to incompatibility of such adhesives and tapes with washing processes.

(15) Information about Correction:

see Notice of 08 November 2018 (08.11.2018)