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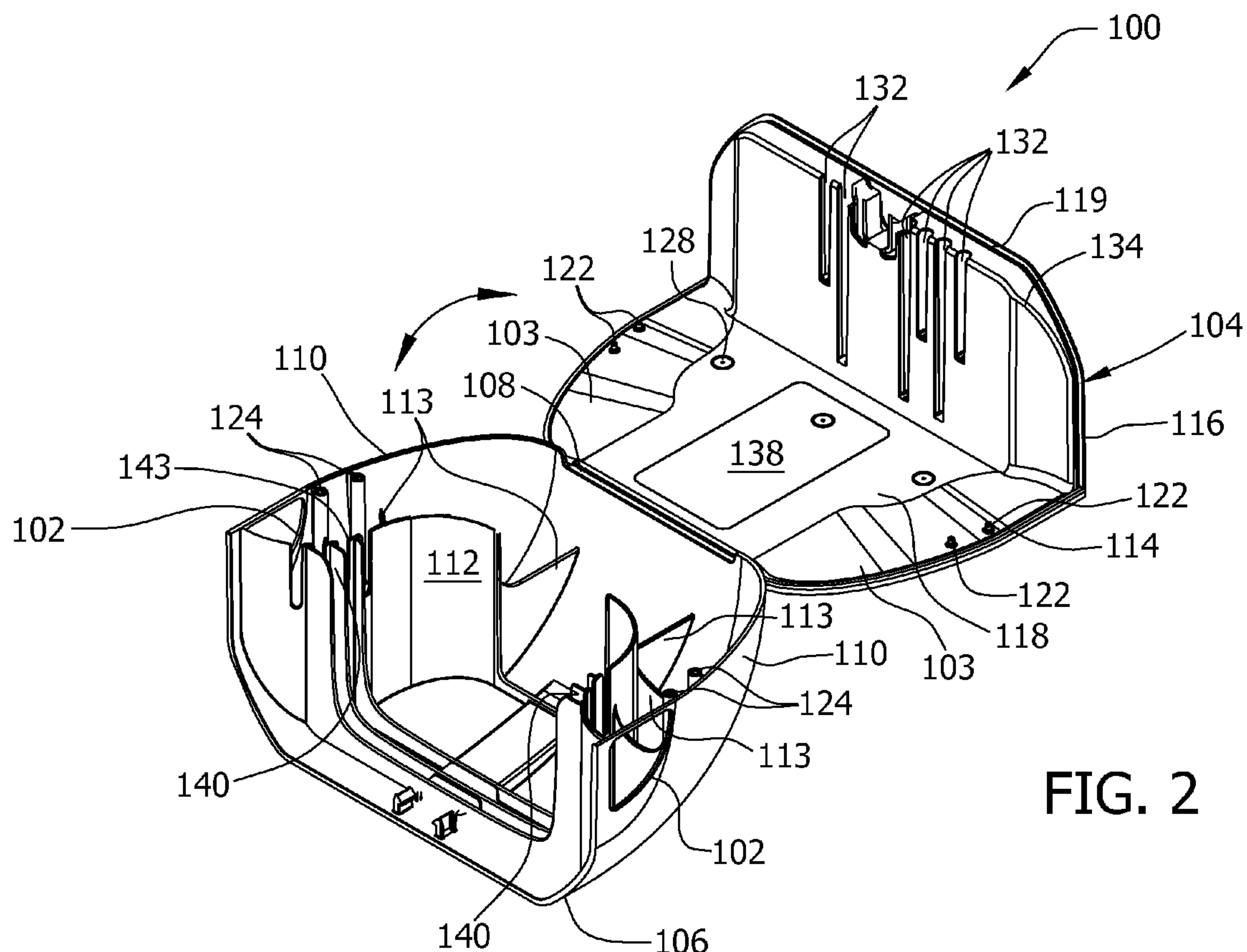


FIG. 2

(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A rodent management station (100) includes a housing having a base (104) and a lid (106) that together at least in part define an interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the



(57) **Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):**

interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening (102) through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station also includes at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base includes a floor panel (114) and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space. An upstanding rear wall (116) extends upward relative to the floor panel about substantially less than the circumference of the floor panel.

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(54) Title: RODENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

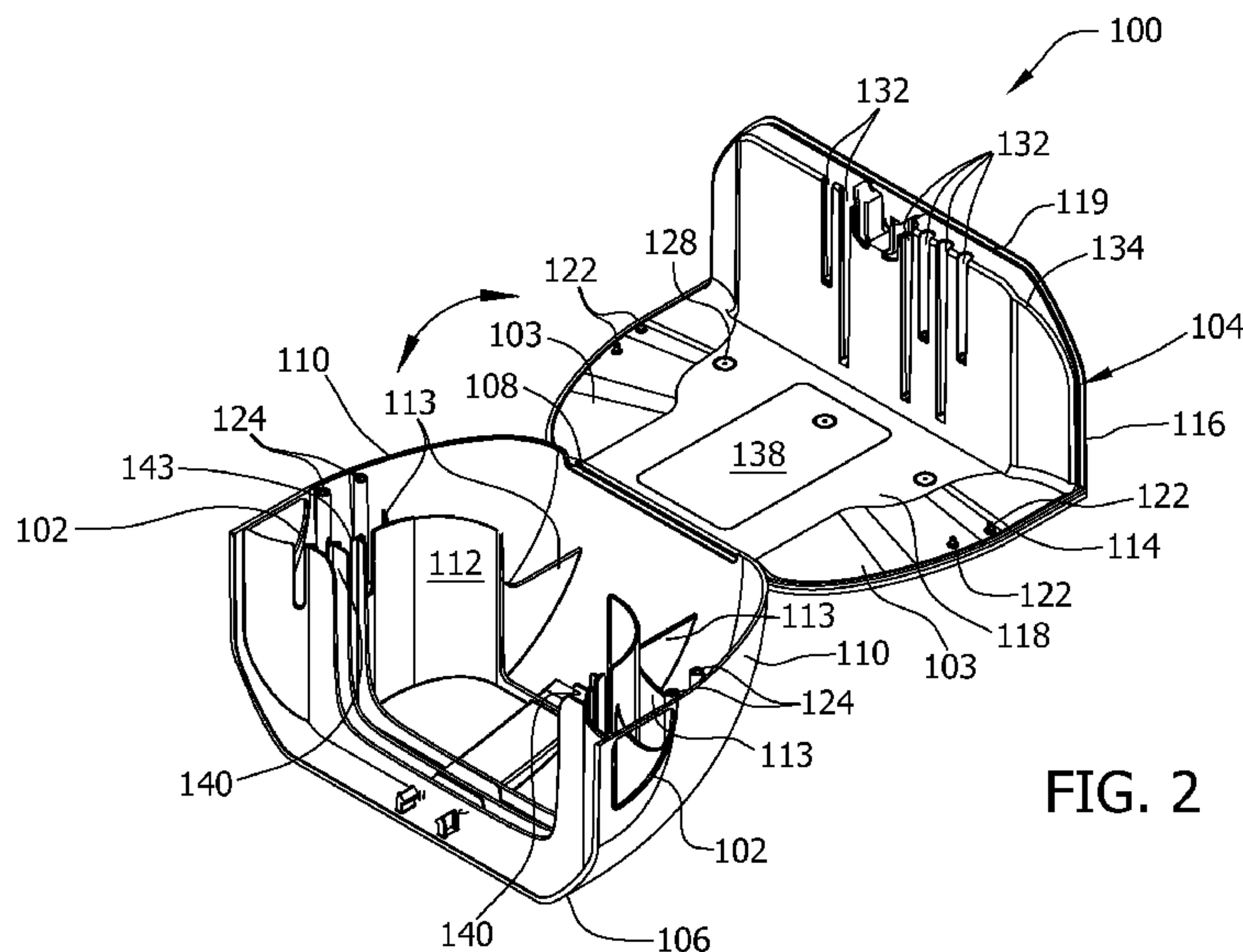


FIG. 2

(57) Abstract: A rodent management station (100) includes a housing having a base (104) and a lid (106) that together at least in part define an interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening (102) through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station also includes at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base includes a floor panel (114) and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space. An upstanding rear wall (116) extends upward relative to the floor panel about substantially less than the circumference of the floor panel.



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RODENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

BACKGROUND

[0001] The embodiments described herein are generally related to rodent management systems, and more specifically to systems for trapping and/or killing rodents. Rodent bait stations typically include a housing having an internal chamber and toxic baits or other trapping devices disposed in the chamber for controlling rodents (e.g., rats and mice). The housing is designed to inhibit non-targeted animals (e.g., dogs, cats) and unauthorized individuals (e.g., children) from coming into contact with the baits or the devices (e.g., trap mechanisms, such as, but not limited to snap traps, live catch traps, or snares). Often, the housing has a generally low-profile. That is, the height of the housing is only slightly taller than an average-sized rodent in a prone (e.g., normal movement – i.e., not sitting or standing) position. The housing includes at least one opening for allowing the rodents access to the interior space of the housing and thereby access to the toxin and/or device. The housings often include two openings that create a straight passageway through which a rodent can pass through the housing. A bait area for placing the toxin and/or trap is partially separated from the passageway by a pair of spaced-apart divider walls. Rodents can access the bait area from the passageway through an opening between the divider walls. The bait stations are placed along a wall (interior or exterior), where rodents generally move and other places they are likely to frequent. The rodent management stations are serviced periodically by a technician to clean debris out of the housing, to replenish the bait supply, and to replace or reset any tripped traps.

[0002] Debris often accumulates within such rodent management stations in between servicing. Such debris includes, but is not limited to: rat droppings, unused bait, rodent carcasses, insects, dust, dirt, and plant leaves and stems. Removal of debris from prior systems is tedious and time-consuming due to their construction, i.e., having a base or floor and an upstanding perimeter wall. Thus, debris can only be removed in a piecemeal fashion, or by overturning the base, or by suctioning debris from the station. The placement of bait or traps within the housing is often fixed as well, rendering reconfiguration difficult or non-feasible.

[0003] A modular rodent management system is therefore needed which provides for efficient cleaning of the station, good weather resistance and easy reconfiguration of bait and traps housed therein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

[0004] In one aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The base further comprises at least one upstanding wall extending upward relative to the floor panel about substantially less than the circumference of the floor panel such that a continuous circumferential segment of at least about 25 percent of the floor panel circumference is free from enclosure by the at least one upstanding wall in the opened configuration of the station.

[0005] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a front edge, a rear edge, and transversely opposite side edges. In the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed therefrom the inner surface of the floor panel is free from surface

discontinuities of greater than 1 cm transversely across the entire floor panel from one floor panel side edge to the opposite floor side edge.

[0006] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The lid and base are configured such that in the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed from off of the floor panel the inner surface of the floor panel is accessible to permit the removal of debris therefrom without moving the base and without picking or suctioning debris up off of the inner surface of the floor panel.

[0007] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said housing further having internal partition structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber. The partition structure has at least one through-opening therein other than at the bait chamber entryway to provide open communication between the pathway and the bait chamber other than at said bait chamber entryway. The at least one through-opening is sized substantially smaller than the housing entry opening and the bait chamber entryway to inhibit rodents against entering the bait chamber at the at least one through-opening.

[0008] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The housing further has an internal partition structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber. The partition structure is connected to the lid of the housing for conjoint movement with the lid relative to the base upon movement of the lid to the opened configuration of the station. In the closed configuration of the station at least a portion of the partition structure is in closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel to inhibit rodents from crawling under said portion of the partition structure.

[0009] In another aspect, a rodent management station positionable on a support surface. The station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The housing has a bottom defined at least in part by the base and adapted for resting on the support surface. The base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. At least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The inner surface of the floor panel is everywhere disposed above the bottom of the housing by at least 2.54 mm (0.1 inches).

[0010] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part

defining the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, at least a portion of the inner surface of the floor panel is textured to provide a tactile response to rodents moving within the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0011] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The housing has an inspection member allowing inspection of the interior space of the housing without opening the station.

[0012] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The base further comprises an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference thereof, the upstanding wall having an upper edge and at least one gutter disposed in and extending along at least a portion of the upper edge of the upstanding wall to facilitate water drainage from the upstanding wall. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and

an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0013] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The base further comprises an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference, the upstanding wall having an upper edge and at least one drain hole disposed in the upper edge out of communication with the interior space of the housing to permit water to drain from the upper edge of the upstanding wall away from the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0014] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing. The base further comprises an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference thereof, the upstanding wall comprising an inner panel in part defining the interior space of the housing, an outer panel in opposed, spaced relationship with the inner panel, and a top panel spanning the inner and outer panels of said upstanding wall. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. In the closed position of the station the lid covers at least a portion of the top panel of the upstanding wall of the base. The housing has an

entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0015] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having a front, a rear, opposite sides, and an interior space, the housing including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The housing has at least two mounting ports separate from the rodent entry opening. At least two mounting ports are mounted on the same one of the front, the rear, the one side and the opposite side of the housing.

[0016] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. A locking mechanism is operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station. The locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of the lid and the base has an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base. A cover is connected to at least one of the lid and the base. The cover extends over at least a portion of the at least one opening to inhibit moisture on the housing against entering the housing at said at least one opening.

[0017] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space in

substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. A locking mechanism is operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station. The locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of the lid and the base has an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base. A tool is insertable through the at least one opening for unlocking the lid from the base. The housing further has an outer surface and a guide channel in the outer surface to facilitate guidance of the tool into the at least one opening.

[0018] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. A locking mechanism is operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station. The locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, the lid having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base. A tool is insertable through the at least one opening for unlocking the lid from the base. The tool has an insert portion configured for insertion through the at least one opening, and an elongate handle connected to the insert portion for grasping the tool, the insert portion of the tool is configured for coupling with the lid upon unlocking the lid from the base to facilitate use of the handle to position the lid away from the base toward the opened configuration of the station.

[0019] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a first rodent management station and a second rodent management station. The first rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. A locking mechanism is

operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station. The locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of the lid and the base has an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of a trap and a bait is positionable within the interior space of the housing. The second rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. A locking mechanism is operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station. The locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of the lid and the base has an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base. At least one of a trap and a bait is positionable within the interior space of the housing. The second rodent management station is substantially smaller than the first rodent management station. A tool is insertable through the at least one opening of the first rodent management station housing for unlocking the lid from the base of said first rodent management station. The tool is also insertable through the at least one opening of the second rodent management station housing for unlocking the lid from the base of said second rodent management station.

[0020] In another aspect, a rodent management station is positionable on a support surface and comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The housing has a bottom for resting on the support surface. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing. The base comprises a floor panel having a

perimeter, an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing and an outer surface at least in part defining the bottom of the housing. The floor panel outer surface has a plurality of cavities disposed therein in spaced relationship with the perimeter of the floor panel.

[0021] In another aspect, a rodent management station is mountable on a mounting surface and comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The base has an inner surface and an outer surface, said housing having a generally planar bottom defined at least in part by the outer surface of the base for resting on the mounting surface. The base has at least one predetermined bore location at the bottom of the housing at which a bore is to be formed in the base to facilitate mounting the housing on the mounting surface. The base further has guide structure disposed on the outer surface thereof at the bottom of the housing at least one of at and adjacent the at least one predetermined bore location.

[0022] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the housing having a bottom defined at least in part by the base, said base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing. The lid is hinged to the base one of at and adjacent the floor panel thereof on a hinge axis such that the lid is capable of hinged movement on said hinge axis relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The hinge axis is located on the housing higher than the bottom of said housing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0023] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. In the closed configuration the entry opening has a bottom, a top, a height and a width, the width of the entry opening being substantially greater at the bottom of the opening than at the top thereof. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0024] In another aspect, a rodent management station comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, said base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. In the closed position of the station the lid has a terminal edge one of resting on and in closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel. The base further comprises at least one stabilizing member disposed on the base and extending up above the inner surface of the floor panel to inhibit transverse movement of the lid relative to the base at the terminal edge of the lid. The housing has an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The rodent management station further comprises at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

[0025] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through

which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The housing further has internal structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway leading from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber. A rodent trap is disposed at least in part within the bait chamber. At least a portion of the trap extending from the bait chamber outward through the entryway thereof into the pathway.

[0026] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The housing further has internal structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway leading from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber. A rodent trap is disposed at least in part within the bait chamber. Rodent bait is disposed within the bait chamber separate from the rodent trap.

[0027] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the base having at least one upstanding sidewall. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A rodent trap is positionable within the interior space of the housing. The rodent trap is configured for releasable connection with the at least one upstanding wall of the base.

[0028] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base

between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The base has an upstanding wall. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A rodent trap is positionable within the interior space of the housing. A trap placement member is positionable within the interior space of the housing in releasable connection with the upstanding wall of the housing. The trap placement member is configured for aligning the rodent trap at a predetermined location within the interior space of the housing.

[0029] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The base has an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing. A bait support is positionable within the interior space of the housing and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing. The bait support is further configured for releasable connection with at least one of the base and the lid.

[0030] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The base has an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing. A bait support is disposed within the interior space of the housing out of contact with the floor of the housing and is configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing.

[0031] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part

defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The base has an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing. A bait support is positionable within the interior space of the housing and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing, the bait. A height adjustment member is configured for selective adjustment of the height of the bait support above the floor of the housing.

[0032] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. The base has an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing. A plurality of bait blocks are provided and at least one bait support is positionable within the interior space of the housing and is configured for supporting the bait blocks in spaced relationship with the floor of the housing with the bait blocks collectively arranged in a generally horizontal line.

[0033] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A live trap is positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing. The live trap has an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap. The live trap is configured for disposition within the interior space of the housing with the live trap entry opening out of directional

alignment with the at least one opening of the housing in the closed configuration of the housing.

[0034] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A live trap is positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof. The live trap has an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap. A first trap mechanism is positionable in the live trap for trapping rodents within the live trap. A second trap mechanism is provided that is different from the first trap mechanism and positionable in the live trap in place of the first trap mechanism for trapping rodents within the live trap. The live trap and trap mechanisms are configured for releasable securement of the respective first and second trap mechanisms in the live trap to permit interchangeable use of the first and second trap mechanisms in the live trap.

[0035] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof is provided. The live trap has an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap. The live trap includes a trap mechanism releasably positionable in the live trap for trapping rodents within the live trap. The live trap has an access opening and an access panel positionable between a closed position in which the access opening is closed and an opened position. The trap mechanism is serviceable, insertable into and removable

from the live trap through the access opening in the opened position of the access panel.

[0036] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof is provided. The live trap comprises a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, and an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap. The inlet portion has an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap for trapping within the trap portion thereof. The trap portion of the live trap has at least one vent opening sized substantially smaller than the live trap entry opening to permit fluid communication between the interior of the trap portion of the live trap and the interior space of the housing.

[0037] In another aspect, a rodent management system comprises a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing. The lid is positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing. The housing has at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing. A live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof is provided. The live trap has a top and a bottom and comprising a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap. The inlet portion has an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap, a trap mechanism disposed at least in part within the inlet portion of the live trap in spaced relationship with the entry opening of the live trap, and a plurality of blocking members depending from the top of the live trap at the inlet portion and arranged in longitudinally spaced

relationship along the inlet portion to inhibit rodents trapped within the live trap against manipulating the trap mechanism to escape from the trap.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0038] Figure 1A is a perspective view of one embodiment of a rodent management station in a closed configuration;

[0039] Figure 1B is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 1B-1B of Figure 1A;

[0040] Figure 2 is a perspective view of the rodent management station of Figure 1 in an open configuration;

[0041] Figure 3 is a top plan view of the rodent management station of Figure 1;

[0042] Figure 4 is a front elevation thereof;

[0043] Figure 5A is a right side elevation thereof;

[0044] Figure 5B is an enlarged view of a portion of Figure 5A;

[0045] Figure 6 is a rear elevation thereof;

[0046] Figure 7 is a bottom plan view thereof;

[0047] Figure 8 is a right side elevation view of the rodent management station of Figure 1 in an open configuration;

[0048] Figure 9 is a top plan view thereof;

[0049] Figure 10 is a perspective view thereof with bait positioned horizontally in the station;

[0050] Figure 11 is a right side elevation view of the rodent management station with bait positioned horizontally in the station;

[0051] Figure 12 is a left side elevation view of the rodent management station with bait positioned horizontally in the station;

[0052] Figure 13 is a perspective view similar to Figure 10 but with a bait positioned vertically in the station;

[0053] Figure 14 is a top plan view thereof;

[0054] Figure 15 is a cross-section taken in the place of line 15-15 of Figure 14;

[0055] Figure 16 is an enlarged area of Figure 15;

[0056] Figure 17 is a perspective view of bait blocks positioned on a bait support device;

[0057] Figure 18 is a perspective view of a snap trap for use in the rodent management station of Figure 1;

[0058] Figure 19 is a side elevation thereof;

[0059] Figure 20 is a top plan view of the rodent management station of Fig. 1 with the snap trap of Figure 18 positioned therein;

[0060] Figure 21 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 21-21 of Figure 20;

[0061] Figure 22 is a perspective view of the rodent management station of Figure 1 in an open configuration and with a live trap and bait positioned therein;

[0062] Figure 23 is a top plan view of the rodent management station arrangement of Figure 22;

[0063] Figure 24 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 24-24 of Figure 23;

[0064] Figure 25 is a perspective view of the live trap of the rodent management station arrangement of Figure 23;

[0065] Figure 26 is a top plan view thereof;

[0066] Figure 27 is a front elevation thereof;

[0067] Figure 28 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 28-28 of Figure 27 and illustrating a ramp gate trap mechanism;

[0068] Figure 29 is a cross-section similar to Figure 28 with a swinging gate trap mechanism;

[0069] Figure 30 is a cross-section similar to Figure 28 but illustrating a funnel trap mechanism;

[0070] Figure 31 is a perspective view of the swinging gate of Figure 29;

[0071] Figure 32 is a perspective view of the funnel of Figure 30;

[0072] Figure 33 is a perspective view of a key being used to unlock the lid from the base of the rodent management station of Figure 1;

[0073] Figure 34 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 34-34 of Figure 33 and illustrating a locking mechanism used to secure the base to the lid of the rodent management station of Figure 1;

- [0074] Figure 35 is an enlarged view of the locking mechanism of Figure 34;
- [0075] Figure 36 is a perspective view of the key of Figure 33;
- [0076] Figure 37 is a perspective view of the key engaging the locking mechanism, with portions of the station broken away for illustrative purposes;
- [0077] Figure 38 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a rodent management station in an open configuration;
- [0078] Figure 38A is a rear elevation view thereof;
- [0079] Figure 39 is a top plan view thereof;
- [0080] Figure 40 is a right side elevation view thereof;
- [0081] Figure 41 is a perspective view of a bait support device for use in the rodent management station of Figure 38;
- [0082] Figure 42 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a bait support device including a bait pin;
- [0083] Figure 43 is a right side elevation view of the bait pin of Figure 42;
- [0084] Figure 44 is a front elevation thereof;
- [0085] Figure 45 is a perspective view of the bait support device of Figure 42 utilizing an alternative bait pin;
- [0086] Figure 46 is a front elevation of the bait pin of Figure 45;
- [0087] Figure 47 is a perspective view of the bait support device of Figure 45 with bait blocks positioned on the bait pin;
- [0088] Figure 48 is a perspective view of the bait support device of Figures 42 and 45 with the bait pin omitted;
- [0089] Figure 49 is a top plan view thereof;
- [0090] Figure 50 is a right side elevation view thereof;
- [0091] Figure 51 is a rear elevation view thereof;
- [0092] Figure 52 is a perspective view of a spacer for use with the rodent management station of Figure 38.
- [0093] Figure 53 is a top plan view thereof;
- [0094] Figure 54 is a right side elevation view thereof;
- [0095] Figure 55 is a front elevation thereof;
- [0096] Figure 56 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a live trap for with the rodent management stations of Figure 1 and Figure 38;

[0097] Figure 57 is a top plan view thereof;

[0098] Figure 58 is a front elevation thereof;

[0099] Figure 59 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 59-59 of Figure 58;

[00100] Figure 60 is a perspective view of the live trap of Figure 56 with another embodiment of a trap mechanism positioned therein;

[00101] Figure 61 is a front elevation thereof;

[00102] Figure 62 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 62-62 of Figure 61;

[00103] Figure 63 is a perspective view of the live trap of Figure 56 with another embodiment of a trap mechanism positioned therein;

[00104] Figure 64 is a front elevation thereof;

[00105] Figure 65 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 65-65 of Figure 64;

[00106] Figure 66 is a rear perspective view of the live trap of Figure 56;

[00107] Figure 67 is a rear elevation thereof;

[00108] Figure 68 is a right side elevation thereof;

[00109] Figure 69 is a perspective view of a bottom portion of the live trap of Figure 56;

[00110] Figure 70 is a top view thereof;

[00111] Figure 71 is a side elevation thereof;

[00112] Figure 72 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a bait support device for use with the rodent management station of Figure 38, with bait blocks shown in phantom;

[00113] Figure 73 is a top plan view thereof;

[00114] Figure 74 is a side elevation thereof;

[00115] Figure 75 is a perspective view of another embodiment of a bait support device for use with the rodent management station of Figure 38, with bait blocks shown in phantom;

[00116] Figure 76 is a perspective view thereof;

[00117] Figure 77 is a side elevation thereof;

[00118] Figure 78 is a top plan view thereof;

[00119] Figure 79 is a top plan view of a third embodiment of a rodent management station in a closed configuration;

[00120] Figure 80 is a front elevation thereof;

[00121] Figure 81 is a bottom plan view thereof;

[00122] Figure 82 is a side elevation thereof;

[00123] Figure 83 is a perspective view thereof;

[00124] Figure 84 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 84-84 of Figure 80;

[00125] Figure 85 is a top plan view of a bait support device for use with the rodent management station of Figure 79;

[00126] Figure 86 is a perspective view thereof;

[00127] Figure 87 is a top plan view of another embodiment of a bait support device for use with the rodent management station of Figure 79;

[00128] Figure 88 is a side elevation thereof;

[00129] Figure 89 is a perspective view thereof;

[00130] Figure 90 is a front elevation of the rodent management station of Figure 79 in an open configuration;

[00131] Figure 91 is a right side elevation thereof;

[00132] Figure 92 is a perspective view thereof;

[00133] Figure 93 is top plan view thereof;

[00134] Figure 94 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 94-94 in Figure 82;

[00135] Figure 95 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 95-95 in Figure 94;

[00136] Figure 96 is a top plan view of the rodent management station of Figure 79 in the open configuration;

[00137] Figure 97 is cross-section taken in the plane of line 97-97 in Figure 96;

[00138] Figure 98 is a perspective view of the rodent management station of Figure 96;

[00139] Figure 99 is a cross-section of a fourth embodiment of a rodent management station;

[00140] Figure 100 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 100-100 in Figure 99;

[00141] Figure 101 is a top plan view of the rodent management station of Figure 99 in an open configuration;

[00142] Figure 102 is a cross-section taken in the plane of line 102-102 in Figure 101;

[00143] Figure 103 is a perspective view of the rodent management station of Figure 99;

[00144] Figure 104 is a right side elevation of a bait support in the form of a wire for supporting bait blocks in either the third or fourth embodiments of the rodent management station;

[00145] Figure 105 is a left side elevation thereof;

[00146] Figure 106 is a rear elevation thereof; and

[00147] Figure 107 is a perspective view thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[00148] Referring now to the drawings and in particular to Fig.1, one embodiment of a rodent management system generally comprises a rodent management station, which is indicated generally at 100 and includes a housing having an interior space and at least one and more suitably two entry openings 102 formed therein through which rodents enter the interior space of the station. The rodent management station 100 is of a modular design, permitting a plurality of selective bait and/or trap configurations as will be described in further detail later herein.

[00149] The rodent management station 100 generally comprises a base 104 and a lid 106 (together broadly defining the station housing) that is releasably connectable to the base for positioning relative to the base between an opened configuration and a closed configuration of the station. In the closed configuration (Fig. 1), the lid 106 and base 104 together form a substantially enclosed interior space, with the entry openings 102 disposed in opposite sides of the station 100, and more particularly in opposite sides of the lid 106 in the illustrated embodiment of Fig. 1.

[00150] In accordance with one suitable embodiment, the entry openings 102 are suitably sized and configured to facilitate a feeling of comfort to rodents that approach and partially enter the station 100 housing to entice the rodent to further enter the station. Each entry opening 102 of the illustrated embodiment (with reference to Figs. 5A and 5B) has a generally one-quarter circle shape or one-quarter circle ellipse. In particular, the entry opening 102 has a top 105, a bottom 107, a height H and a width W, with the width of the entry opening being substantially greater at the bottom of the opening than at the top thereof. In particular, the width W of the entry opening 102 decreases as the opening extends upward from the bottom 107 of the opening. Additionally, the entry opening 102 has a maximum width (e.g., where the width W of the opening is greatest along the height H thereof) and a maximum height (e.g., where the height of the opening is greatest along the width thereof) with the maximum width of the opening is greater than the maximum height of the opening.

[00151] In the opened configuration (Fig. 2), the lid 106 is generally positioned at least in part away from the base to provide access to the interior space of the rodent management station 100 for maintenance of the station such as, without limitation, replenishing bait supply, inspecting the rodent management station 100, placing and/or resetting traps, and clearing debris from the rodent management station 100. The base 104 and lid 106 may be suitably fabricated from any number of materials, most suitably plastic or other weather resistant material. For example, the base 104 and lid 106 may be formed in an injection molding process used for producing parts from thermoplastic or thermosetting plastic materials. It is understood, however, that the base 104 and lid 106 may be constructed of metal or other suitable materials, and that the base and the lid may be constructed of different materials from each other, without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00152] The lid 106 is suitably hinged to the base 104, such as by a living hinge 108 (or a plurality of living hinges) in which a continuous piece of material formed integrally with the lid and base (as in the illustrated embodiments) defines the hinge, a mechanical hinge or other suitable hinge configuration to permit hinged movement of the lid between the opened and closed configurations of the station while maintaining connection of the lid with the base to inhibit loss of the lid during

servicing of the rodent management station 100. It is understood that the lid 106 may be attached to the base 104 other than by a hinge and remain within the scope of this invention. It also contemplated that the lid 106 may be entirely separable from the base 104 without departing from the scope of this invention. In the closed configuration of the station 100, the lid 106 and base 104 are further releasably held together by a suitable locking mechanism 142 described later herein to inhibit unauthorized or unintended opening of the rodent management station 100. Additionally, more than one locking mechanism may be used to releasably hold together the lid 106 and base 104 in the closed configuration of the station 100.

[00153] The illustrated lid 106 suitably comprises laterally opposite side walls 110 that broadly define opposite sides of the rodent management station 100, a front wall 136 broadly defining a front of the rodent management station and a top wall 137 broadly defining a top of the rodent management station. In the illustrated embodiment the side walls 110, top wall 137 and front wall 136 of the lid 106 together define a generally quarter-dome shape although the top wall 137 is slightly flattened as it approaches the base 104. It is understood, however, that the lid 106 may be shaped other than as illustrated without departing from the scope of this invention, and that in alternative embodiments the base may instead, or additionally define one or more of the sides of the rodent management station and/or the front of the station. The side walls 110, top wall 137 and front wall 136 of the lid are formed integrally in the illustrated embodiment, such as by being molded as a single piece. However one or more of these walls may be formed separate from the others and connected thereto such as by welding, fastening, adhering or other suitable connection technique. Additionally, the lid 106 may in some embodiments be configured to have only three sides (rather than the four-sided lid 106), and be of a generally wedge-like shape.

[00154] As illustrated in Fig. 2, the lid 106 further comprises interior panels 112 (broadly, partition structure) depending therefrom to partition the enclosed interior space of the rodent management station 100 into a suitable layout for rodent management. These interior panels 112 may be molded together with other lid components (e.g., the top wall 137, side walls 110, and/or front wall 136) or formed

separate therefrom and connected thereto by adhesive, welding, fastening or other suitable attachment technique.

[00155] As illustrated in the top plan view of Figure 3, the base 104 and lid 106 are substantially similar in their length and width, although either the lid 106 or base 104 may have a slightly larger or smaller length or width without departing from the scope of the embodiments. As seen best in the front elevation view of Figure 4 and the side elevation view of Figure 5A, the height of the rodent management station 100 may suitably vary over its length and/or width with the height decreasing as the lid 106 transitions from the top wall thereof into the front wall and then extends down to the base 104, such as where the lid is hinged to the base. This sloping profile of the lid 106 facilitates drainage of water, ice, or snow from the outer surface of the lid 106, thus inhibiting stagnation of such elements on the rodent management station and/or entry of water into the station.

[00156] With particular reference to Figs. 7 and 8, the base 104 comprises a floor panel, or bottom panel 114, having a circumference, an outer surface 120 which broadly (at least in part) defines a bottom of the housing and more particularly of the rodent management station 100, and an inner surface or floor on which rodents move within the interior space of the station. As used herein, the bottom of the housing (and hence the rodent management station 100) refers to the portion or portions of the housing that contact a planar surface when the station is set on such planar surface. Thus, it is understood that the entire outer surface 120 of the bottom panel 114 need not rest on such a planar surface.

[00157] In one embodiment, the base 104 also has at least one upstanding wall 116 (otherwise referred to herein as an upstanding sidewall or rear wall) extending upward relative to the bottom panel 114 about substantially less than the entire circumference of the bottom panel. Such an arrangement permits (with all internal traps removed from the housing) debris to be easily swept off of the floor of the housing when the lid 106 is opened for servicing, e.g., without having to reach into the station and remove debris or tilt or turn over the base 104 of the rodent management station. For example, the circumferential extent of the upstanding wall 116 according to one embodiment is such that a continuous circumferential segment of at least about 25 percent of the bottom panel 114 is free from enclosure by the at

least one upstanding wall. In the illustrated embodiment of Fig. 8 the at least one upstanding wall comprises an upstanding rear wall 116 of the base (thereby also defining a rear of the housing and more particularly of the rodent management station 100) extending solely along the rear extent of the floor panel 114.

[00158] It is understood, however, that a greater extent of the circumference of the floor panel 114 may have one or more upstanding walls extending upward therefrom. For example, the floor panel 114 may be circumscribed on generally three sides thereof with one side remaining unenclosed by an upstanding wall, or a pair of upstanding walls may be disposed on opposite sides (e.g., front and rear, or laterally opposite sides) of the floor panel without departing from the scope of this invention. The floor panel 114 and upstanding or rear wall 116 of this embodiment are suitably formed integral, such as by molding them as a single piece, although these components may be formed separate and connected by any suitable connection technique.

[00159] In one suitable embodiment, the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 (e.g., the floor of the housing) tapers, or slopes downward from a central region of the inner surface toward at least the laterally opposite sides of the housing (e.g., where the side walls of the lid generally abut the bottom panel). In the illustrated embodiment the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 remains relatively planar as it extends from the central region thereof to the front of the station 100. However, it is also contemplated that additionally, or instead, at least a portion of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 may taper or slope downward from the central region thereof toward the front of the housing (e.g., where the front wall of the lid abuts or is hinged to the bottom panel). Providing such a slope or taper to the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 facilitates water drainage off of the bottom panel and out of the rodent management station 100 should water enter the interior space of the housing. In one embodiment, the taper of the inner surface of the bottom panel 114 may be achieved by varying the thickness of the bottom panel, with the central region of the bottom panel having the greatest thickness and the thickness gradually tapering down toward the perimeter of the bottom panel. However the inner surface 118 taper may be achieved other than by varying the thickness of the bottom and remain within the scope of this invention. To further facilitate drainage of water

out of the rodent management station 100, small gaps or notches (not shown) may be formed in the lid and/or the bottom panel 114 where the lid 106 abuts the perimeter of the bottom panel 114.

[00160] While the inner surface 118 tapers and thus varies in elevation relative to the bottom of the station 100 housing, in one embodiment the entire inner surface of the bottom panel 114 suitably has a minimum height above the bottom of the station housing, such as at least about 0.1 inches, and more suitably at least about 0.2 inches, to inhibit water surrounding the station from entering the station. In the illustrated embodiment, the bottom panel 114 has a peripheral skirt 115 having a height according to the suitable minimum height of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel above the bottom of the station 100 housing.

[00161] As seen best in Figs. 8 and 12, the bottom panel 114 has a pair of low profile (e.g., low height) pins or nubs 122 (broadly, stabilizing members) extending upward therefrom generally adjacent the perimeter of the bottom panel at each of the laterally opposite sides thereof. For example, the nubs 122 may be less than or equal to .25 inches in height according to some embodiments. Corresponding locating members, such as in the general form of posts 125 (Fig. 14), are attached to (and are more suitably formed integral with) the inner surface of the lid 106, with each post having a bore 124 extending into the lower end thereof for receiving a respective one of the locating nubs 122 upon closing the lid. Thus, as the lid 106 is closed, the locating members (e.g., posts 125) are lowered down over the nubs 122. The nubs 122 seat within the bores 124 of the respective posts 125 when the lid 106 is fully closed. In this manner, the nubs stabilize the lid on the base, i.e., by providing increased resistance to the side walls 110 of the lid (and hence the rodent management station 100) flexing, bending, or otherwise being pushed inward relative to the bottom panel 114 of the base 104.

[00162] The nubs 122, in one embodiment, are suitably low enough to facilitate the sweeping of the housing floor (e.g., the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114) by a broom or other suitable cleaning device in a generally continuous movement – such as starting from the laterally off of one side of the bottom panel, across the inner surface thereof – and then off the opposite side of the bottom panel. Additionally, it should be understood that the nubs 122 may be reduced in number or

altogether eliminated without departing from the scope of the embodiments. It is thus noted that the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 is thus suitably free from surface discontinuities that would otherwise impede the movement of the broom, cleaning brush or other cleaning device. The term discontinuity as used in this manner refers to upstanding structure that extends up from the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 a height greater than about 1 cm, and/or an abrupt (e.g., step) change in elevation (up or down) of the inner surface of the bottom panel of greater than about 1 cm. This facilitates sweeping or brushing debris from the bottom panel without the cleaning device being impeded by any such discontinuities and without debris getting caught or trapped by such discontinuities.

[00163] With reference now to Figure 7, the outer (or under) surface 120 of the bottom panel 114 has a plurality of ribs 126 extending longitudinally (e.g., front-to-back) and defining inset grooves or channels (broadly, cavities) between the ribs as well as additional inset void space. Upon applying adhesive to the outer surface 120 for securing the rodent management station 100, and more particularly the base 104 to the ground or other mounting surface, adhesive more readily spreads up into the grooves and other voids spaces to enhance the bonding between the base and the mounting surface. The ribs 126 provide additional surface area for the adhesive and also provide structural rigidity to the bottom panel 114 of the base 104. In the illustrated embodiment, the cavities (i.e., the grooves and other void spaces between the ribs 126) are closed at their longitudinal ends near (but otherwise in spaced relationship with) the perimeter of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104, such as at the front and rear of the bottom panel, thus preventing the seepage of adhesive out from the base and inhibiting water and dirt from getting in underneath the bottom panel of the base.

[00164] In other embodiments, a variety of configurations of the ribs 126 may be utilized. For example, the ribs 126 may extend from the rear wall 116 inward and then curve and return to the rear wall 116, thus defining cavities that are at least in part arcuate. In other embodiments the ribs 126 may be configured in discrete blocks, thus allowing for greater dispersion of adhesives used to bond the rodent management station 100 to the ground or mounting surface. Furthermore, at least some of the ribs 126 may extend to or through (i.e., the ribs have open ends) the perimeter of the

bottom panel 114. Moreover, the shapes of the cavities formed by the ribs 126 may vary (e.g., one cavity may be rectangular or elongate while another is semi-circular or circular. The ribs 126 may also be configured such that two or more cavities are of different sizes, e.g., with one cavity or channel having a size (e.g., a length, width and/or cross-section) and another cavity or channel having a greater size.

[00165] The bottom panel 114 of the base 104 is also suitably constructed to define predetermined bore locations 128 at which a bore is to be formed (if desired) in the bottom panel such as with a drill, a punch tool, or other suitable device to facilitate mounting the housing (e.g., and hence the rodent management station 100) on a mounting surface. In particular, suitable fasteners (not shown) may be inserted through such bores in the bottom panel 114 and into the underlying mounting surface to additionally, or alternatively, secure the base 104 to the mounting surface. In the illustrated embodiment, circular ribs 129 (broadly, “guide structure”) are formed on the outer surface 120 of the bottom panel 114 to identify the predetermined bore locations 128 to at least substantially circumscribe each bore location and more suitably encircle each predetermined bore location. The circular ribs 129 also reinforce the bottom panel 114 at the bore locations 128 and define additional void space to retain adhesive used to mount the rodent management station 100 to the mounting surface. More than one circular rib 129 may be disposed at each predetermined bore location 128, such as concentric arrangement with each other. In this arrangement, a first circular rib having a first diameter is encircled by a second circular rib having a second diameter greater than the first diameter. The first circular rib and second circular rib are further in a spaced relationship.

[00166] With particular reference now to Figs. 7, 8 and 16, the upstanding rear wall 116 of the illustrated base 104 is suitably of a multiple wall construction and in this instance a double wall construction. In particular, the rear wall 116 comprises an inner panel 117 that in part defines the interior space of the station 100 housing and an outer panel 119 in generally opposed, spaced relationship with the inner panel to define a gap or open space 123 therebetween. A connecting panel 121, such as in the form of a top panel and opposite end panels in the illustrated embodiment, spans and more suitably connects the inner and outer panels 117, 119 to substantially enclose the gap or open space between the inner and outer panels. At least one of the inner and

outer panels 117, 119, and more suitably each of the inner and outer panels, has a lower edge at least a portion of which and more suitably entirely is at the bottom of the housing 100 (e.g., the inner and outer panels may be co-terminal at the bottom of the housing).

[00167] The top panel of the rear wall 116 suitably defines a relatively planar or flat shelf (broadly, an upper edge) along the top of the rear wall. The lid 106 is suitably configured (e.g., relatively flat) along an edge margin where the lid overlays the top of the rear wall so the lid lays flat down against the shelf in the closed configuration of the rodent management station 100. Such an arrangement provides increased resistance to crushing of the lid 106 by a downward directed force, such as by someone inadvertently stepping on the rodent management station 100 or dropping a heavy object on the rodent management station. As one example, the flat shelf formed by the top panel of the rear wall 116 in suitable embodiment has a maximum width in the range of about 0.5 cm to about 5.0 cm. It is understood, however, that the width of the top panel, and hence of the shelf formed thereby, may vary along the length of the top panel. It is also understood that the maximum width of the top panel may be other than within the above range without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00168] In a particularly suitable embodiment as best seen in Figs. 8 and 16, the outer panel 119 of the rear wall 116 includes an upper edge that is disposed slightly above the top panel thereof (as well as above an upper edge of the inner panel 117) so that in the closed configuration of the rodent management station 100 (see Fig. 5) the edge of the lid 106 abuts or is at least in closely spaced relationship with the portion of the outer panel that extends above the top panel thereof to inhibit a person's fingers or tools against insertion between the lid 106 and the base 104 to unintentionally open the station 100. As is also illustrated in Fig. 2, the outer panel 119 also extends slightly outward of each of the end panels of the rear wall 116 with the lid 106 being configured such that the edge of the lid abuts or is at least in closely spaced relationship with the outward extending portion of the outer panel.

[00169] The rear wall 116 (i.e., the upstanding wall of the base 104) and more suitably the top panel thereof, and even more suitably the top panel and end panels thereof in one embodiment, has at least one gutter (e.g., a channel) 135,

disposed therein and extending along at least a portion of the upper edge defined by the top panel. In the illustrated embodiment, for example, a respective gutter 135 extends from generally adjacent each transverse side of the locking mechanism along the upper edge defined by the top panel and down along the end panels of the rear wall all the way to where the rear wall meets the bottom panel 114. This gutter 135 arrangement facilitates the run-off of water that gets into the station via the locking mechanism or between the lid 106 and the rear wall 116. Additionally, as illustrated best in Fig. 10, the corner at the juncture of the upstanding rear wall 116 (and more suitably the inner panel thereof) with the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 is substantially rounded to further facilitate water entering the rodent management station to run along this corner to the sides of the station for exiting the station at the entry openings 102.

[00170] In one particularly suitable embodiment, one or more drain holes 127 disposed in the top panel of the rear wall 116 and more suitably along the gutter 135 in spaced relationship with each other to facilitate drainage of water from the rear wall down between the inner and outer panels of the rear wall (i.e., away from the interior space of the housing).

[00171] With reference now to Figs. 2, 6 and 8, the upstanding rear wall 116 of the base 104 and more suitably the outer panel 119 of the rear wall in the multiple construction of the illustrated embodiment, may include at least one and more suitably two or more mounting ports 130 separate from the rodent entry openings 102. As illustrated in Fig. 6, in one embodiment the outer panel 119 has a pair of mounting ports 130 disposed therein in spaced relationship with each other and in horizontal alignment with each other. It is understood, however, that the pair of mounting ports 130 may alternatively be in vertical (e.g., top above bottom) relationship with each other and remain within the scope of this invention. Providing at least a pair of mounting ports 130 permits strap or cable-type fasteners to be used to secure the base 104 to a mounting surface such as a post, slat or chain-link fence.

[00172] In one particularly suitable embodiment, a movable closure 131 is removably connected to the outer panel 119 of the rear wall 116 at each respective mounting port 130. For example, the movable closure 131 is removable from the outer panel 119 to expose a respective one of the mounting ports 130. More suitably,

the movable closure 131 comprises a frangible closure such as a knock-out plate. It is understood, however, that the closures 131 may be omitted such that the mounting ports 130 are permanently open.

[00173] The rear wall 116 of the base 104 includes an inner panel 117 or surface having elongate, vertically extending slots 132 formed therein. The slots 132 are spaced laterally apart from each other along the inner surface of the rear wall 116, and may be of uniform length but more suitably are of varying lengths with some slots 132 being longer than others. Each of the slots 132 is open at the top of the rear wall 116 and extends down to a location generally intermediate the top and bottom of the rear wall (for the shorter slots) or to adjacent the bottom of the rear wall (e.g., just above the inner surface of the bottom panel, for the longer slots).

[00174] With reference back to Fig. 2, the interior panels 112 (i.e., the internal partition structure) depending from the lid 106 are suitably configured to depend into abutting or closely spaced relationship with the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104 when the lid is closed. These interior panels 112 thus provide additional crush resistance to the lid, such as upon a downward force being applied to the lid. The interior panels 112 also partition the interior space of the housing into a generally central bait chamber 138 (e.g., above the central region of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114) and a pair of generally curved pathways 103 that are defined at least in part by the interior panels. These pathways 103 each extend away from the respective entry opening 102 and lead to the bait chamber 138. An entryway to the bait chamber 138 is also defined at least in part by the interior panels 112. More particularly, in the illustrated embodiment the pathways 103 are defined by the interior panels 112 and by the lid 106. The pathways 103 together form a single open passageway 109 that extends from one entry opening 102, around to adjacent the front of the station 100, past the entryway to the bait chamber 138 and back around to the opposite entry opening. The tortuous passageway 109 prevents rodents entering the rodent management station 100 at the entry openings 102 from traveling straight through the rodent management station 100 from one entry opening to the other.

[00175] The central bait chamber 138 is suitably defined in part by the interior panels 112 and in part by the inner panel 117 of the rear wall 116. A suitable

trap mechanism and/or bait may be positioned within the central bait chamber 138, with the interior panels 112 restricting access to the bait chamber, i.e., by omitting direct access to the bait chamber from the entry openings 102 in the rodent management station. Thus, non-targeted animals (e.g., dogs or cats) and unauthorized individuals (e.g., children) cannot easily reach through the entry openings 102 into the bait chamber when the lid is closed.

[00176] The interior panels 112 in one suitable embodiment have one or more through-openings 141 formed therein, and more suitably disposed in directional alignment with each of the entry openings 102 as illustrated in Fig. 5. For example, in the illustrated embodiment the one or more through-openings 141 comprise a plurality of elongate, vertically extending slots 143 formed in the interior panels 112 to define a plurality of slats, or baffles 140 in directional alignment with the entry openings 102. As used herein, the term “directional alignment” is intended to mean the general direction of travel or viewing through the entry opening 102, such as a straight line through the center of the entry opening. The slots 143 are suitably sized large enough to permit light to enter the rodent management station 100 while still sized substantially smaller than the entry openings 102 so as to inhibit rodents from passing through the slots. In the illustrated embodiment in which the rodent management station 100 has two laterally opposite entry openings 102, the slots 143 also allow light to pass through the entire rodent management station 100 so that a rodent can see straight through the station through the entry openings.

[00177] These slots 143 also provide open communication between the pathways and the central bait chamber 138 so that the rodent is able to better smell (due to air flow through the rodent management station 100) bait in the bait chamber 138 from the exterior of the station and upon entry into the station as the rodent is routed along the pathway 103. It is understood that additional through-openings may be provided along a longer segment of the pathway 103 from the entry opening 102 to the entryway of the bait chamber 138, including along the entire pathway. It is also understood that the through-openings 141 may be other than in the form of slots, such as perforations, holes or other suitable openings that may or may not extend to the bottom edge of the interior panels 112. The interior panels 112 may also include a

plurality of gussets 113 (Fig. 2) or webs where the interior panels 112 adjoin the lid 106 to provide additional strength and rigidity to the lid and to the interior panels.

[00178] Upon entering the rodent management station 100 through one of the openings 102 and traveling along the passageway 109, the rodent is able to enter the bait chamber 138 via the entryway defined by the interior panels 112. In one particularly suitable embodiment, the height of the bait chamber 138 (e.g., the vertical distance from the inner surface of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104 to the inner surface of the top wall 137 of the lid 106) is sufficient to permit the rodent to ingest bait while in a generally upright, seated position as is typically preferred by rodents. For example, while the height of the bait chamber 138 in one embodiment may be non-uniform due to the taper of the lid 106, the bait chamber 138 suitably has a maximum height of about 5.7 inches.

[00179] While not visible in the drawings, in some embodiments at least a portion of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 of the station 100 housing (i.e., the floor of the housing) may be textured to increase traction and thus facilitate the movement of rodents thereon. The texturing may be formed integral with the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114, or applied to the inner surface. For example, in one suitable embodiment the texturing may comprise a plurality of elongate grooves and/or a plurality of elongate bumps formed in or on the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104. More suitably, such grooves and/or bumps may extend across all or part of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 in directional alignment with the entry openings 102 of the station 100 housing, e.g., transversely or side-to-side in the illustrated embodiment. Because rodents entering the station 100 housing at one of the entry openings 102 will move along one of the pathways in a generally back to front direction, arranging the grooves and/or bumps in this manner results in these grooves and/or bumps extending generally cross-wise to the direction in which rodents move along the pathway, thus providing additional traction for such movement.

[00180] It is contemplated that the texturing need not be present over the entire inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 to remain within the scope of this invention. For example, in one embodiment the texturing may be disposed only along the pathways leading from the entry openings 102 to the entryway of the bait chamber

138, while the bottom panel inner surface 118 within the bait chamber is substantially untextured. It is also understood that texturing other than in the form of grooves and/or elongate bumps may be used, in addition to or as an alternative to such grooves and/or bumps. For example, texturing such as knurling, dimples and/or discrete bumps, particulate material molded into the bottom panel or adhered to the inner surface thereof, or other suitable texturing may be used within the scope of this invention.

[00181] With particular reference now to Figs. 33-37, the locking mechanism 142 releasably secures (i.e., interlocks) the lid 106 and base 104 together in the closed configuration of the station 100, thereby inhibiting unauthorized or unintended opening of the rodent management station 100. In a particularly suitable embodiment, the locking mechanism 142, base 104 and lid 106 are further configured so that the locking mechanism is substantially inaccessible from exterior of the station 100 to inhibit rain and snow from entering the rodent management station 100 at the locking mechanism or otherwise inhibiting access to the locking mechanism. The locking mechanism 142 comprises a generally U-shaped lock member 148 having resilient, upstanding members 149 terminating in respective catches 151 (broadly, “catch members”). The lock member 148 may be coupled to either a portion of the lid 106 or a portion of the base 104. The catches 151 have at least one notch formed therein to receive the upstanding members 149. The upstanding members 149 are also outwardly biased.

[00182] The lock member 148 has depending support members 153 which are attached to the rear wall 116 of the base so that the lock member 148 extends vertically within the rodent management station 100. Corresponding latches 150 are formed on the underside of the lid 106 and depend therefrom for latching engagement with the catches of the lock member when the lid is closed to releasably secure the lid in its closed configuration. Alternatively, the lock member 148 may be attached to the lid 106 and the latches 150 mounted on the rear wall 116 without departing from the scope of this invention. The locking mechanism 142, in one embodiment, is positioned above an opening in the top panel of the rear wall 116 of the base 104. Water that reaches the locking mechanism 142 through the lid 106 is thus directed

into the openings and down within the rear wall away from the locking mechanism (and hence other than into the housing and in particular into the bait chamber 138.

[00183] To unlock the locking mechanism 142 a key 152 (Fig. 36) (broadly, a “tool”) having a pair of laterally spaced prongs 162 (broadly, an “insertion portion”) is inserted through a pair of keyholes 154 (Fig. 4) (broadly, “openings”) in the lid 106 into engagement with the upstanding members 149 of the lock member 148 as illustrated in Fig. 35. The keyholes 154 are in a generally vertical orientation (broadly, a “first orientation”). The spacing of the prongs applies a squeezing force to the laterally spaced upstanding members 149 to urge the catches 151 of the lock member 148 toward each other and away from the latches 150 to thereby allow the lid 106 to be opened. A handle 164 of the key 152 is suitably angled relative to the prongs so the handle does not lie against the lid (i.e., it angles up away from the lid at e.g., between 10 degrees and 60 degrees) when the prongs are inserted into the keyholes 154 as illustrated in Fig. 33 to facilitate gripping the handle during unlocking and opening of the lid.

[00184] With reference to Figs. 4 and 33, the lid 106 suitably has a guide channel 144 formed in its outer surface to facilitate guidance of the key 152 and more particularly the prongs thereof into the keyholes 154. The guide channel 144 in one embodiment has a width sized for a sliding fit of the prong portion of the key 152 therein, i.e., the guide channel 144 has a maximum width that is suitably no greater than and is more suitably less than a maximum width of the key 152. The relatively tight fit of the key 152 within the guide channel 144 and the locking mechanism 142 (along with the angled handle, allows the key 152 (i.e., the tool) to be used as a handle for lifting the lid 106 to the closed configuration of the station 100. The guide channel 144 also has a terminal end (broadly, a “proximal end”) that is generally adjacent to at least one of the keyholes 154 and an entry end (a “distal end”) spaced from the terminal end. The guide channel 144 has a first depth at the terminal (i.e., proximal) end and a second depth at the entry end that is substantially less than the first depth (e.g., the depth of the guide channel increases as it approaches the keyholes 154). In use, the prongs are set down against the lid within the channel 144, such as at or near the entry end of the guide channel, and then slid along the channel such that

the sides of the channel properly align the prongs with the keyholes 154 for proper insertion of the prongs into the keyholes.

[00185] In a particularly suitable embodiment, the guide channel 144 is formed in the lid 106 to be at least in part horizontally oriented (e.g., whereas the keyholes 154 are generally vertically oriented) and more suitably to slope downward away from the keyholes 154 to direct water that lands on the lid away from the keyholes 154, and thus inhibit moisture from flowing into the keyholes. The lid 106 is further configured to have a cover panel 146 (broadly, a cover) disposed above the keyholes 154 and extending out over at least a portion of and more suitably the whole of each of the keyholes. The cover 146 in this embodiment is thus in generally opposed, spaced relationship with the guide channel 144 adjacent and at the terminal end of the guide channel 144, such as in a generally horizontal orientation. In this orientation, the cover panel 146 extends in an orientation different from the orientation of the keyholes so that the keyholes are substantially covered against direct contact by falling rain and snow and the cover panel 146 inhibits moisture on the lid 106 or base 104 from entering the housing. It is understood, however, that the cover panel 146 may be configured other than as illustrated and described herein without departing from the scope of this embodiment.

[00186] To further facilitate water (e.g., rain) management as well as to facilitate opening of the lid 106 while remaining hinged to the base 104, the hinge has a hinge axis that is located on the station 100 housing higher than the bottom of the station housing as seen for example in Fig. 8. More suitably, the hinge axis is located on the station 100 housing higher than the inner surface 118 of the bottom or floor panel 114 of the base 104. For example, in one suitable embodiment the hinge axis is located on the station 100 housing about 2.5 mm to about 25 mm above the inner surface 118 of the bottom or floor panel 114 of the base 104. As further illustrated in Fig. 8, the hinge axis is located substantially lower than the upper edge of the rear wall 116 of the base 104, such as nearer in height to the inner surface 118 of the bottom or floor panel 114 than to the upper edge of the rear wall of the base.

[00187] With particular reference now to Figs. 10 and 13, bait such as bait blocks 156 (Figs. 10 and 13), is disposed within the bait chamber 138 and more suitably toward the back of the bait chamber generally adjacent the rear wall of the

base 104. Many different types of bait are available, and their general compositions and principles of operation are well known in the art. Such baits may solely comprise a rodent attractant and others may additionally, or alternatively, comprise one or more toxins intended to kill the rodents.

[00188] Suitable bait supports 158 are used within the rodent management station 100 for positioning and retaining the bait within the bait chamber 138, and more suitably for supporting such bait in spaced relationship above the floor of the housing (e.g., above the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114). In the illustrated embodiment, a plurality of bait blocks 156 are mounted on a “skewer” 160, or wire support which in turn is supported by the bait supports in a horizontal orientation. The skewer 160 passes through a hole in each of the bait blocks 156 – the hole being centrally located in the bait block although the hole need not be centrally located to remain within the scope of this invention. It is also understood that the bait may be other than in the shape of a block or cube without departing from the scope of this invention. The skewer 160 is sized to extend longitudinally outward beyond the opposite ends of a row of bait blocks 156. In particular, one end of the skewer 160 is formed in the manner of a loop or eyelet, the purpose of which will become apparent, while the opposite end of the skewer remains substantially straight.

[00189] As illustrated in Figure 10, the rodent management station 100 and in particular the rear wall 116 and the bait supports 158 are configured such that multiple skewers may be supported by the bait supports in a horizontal orientation with the bait blocks “stacked” in horizontal rows of blocks. More particularly, in the illustrated embodiment the bait supports 158 for supporting the bait blocks in a horizontal orientation comprise a pair of frame members 153, 155 (Figs. 10-12) each having a mounting end configured for generally vertical orientation within respective ones of the slots 132 formed in the rear wall 116 of the base 104. More suitably, receipt of the mounting end of a frame member 153, 155 within the slot 132 and sliding the mounting end (along with the rest of the frame member) down to the bottom of the slot releasably connects the frame member to the rear wall 116 of the base 104. In particular, for frame members 153, 155 used as bait supports 158 to support the bait blocks in a horizontal orientation, the shorter slots 132 in the rear wall are used. In the illustrated embodiment it is the outermost pair of shorter slots 132

that is used, but any combination of shorter slots 132 may be used for horizontal support of the bait blocks depending on the desired lengths of the bait block rows and the size of the skewers 160.

[00190] One frame member 155 (Fig. 11) is configured to extend outward from its mounting end (i.e., away from the rear wall of the base and into the bait chamber 138) and to have a generally U-shaped cradle open at its upper end 157 for receiving the straight ends of the skewers 160. The other frame member 153 (Fig. 12) is configured to extend outward from its mounting end 159 and terminate in a vertically oriented post configuration for receiving the eyelets of the skewers 160. In this manner, the frame members 153 and 155 cooperate to locate and retain the skewers 160 and hence the bait blocks 156 on the bait support in a horizontal orientation. It is contemplated that the skewers 160 may instead extend straight out from both ends of the row of bait blocks 156, and that the frame members 153 and 155 may both be formed to have the U-shaped cradle without departing from the scope of this invention. In a particularly suitable embodiment, the frame members 153 and 155 are configured to support the lowermost horizontal row of bait blocks up off of the inner surface of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104 (i.e., above the floor of the rodent management station) to inhibit water that drains along the inner surface of the bottom panel from contacting the bait blocks.

[00191] In other embodiments, the bait blocks 156 may be stacked vertically in one or more columns, as illustrated in Figures 13-17. Suitable bait support devices 158 for such embodiments each comprise a frame member 153 (e.g., a wire frame member in the illustrated embodiments) having a mounting end 159 that slides into (e.g., via the open upper ends of the slots) and down to the bottom of the slots 132 in the rear wall 116 of the base 104 to releasably connect the bait support 158 to the rear wall. Each frame member 153 further extends outward from the mounting end 159 (i.e., away from the rear wall 116 of the base panel 104) and is configured to terminate in a vertically oriented post on which bait blocks 156 are supported. That is, no skewer 160 (Fig. 10) is needed in these embodiments. When vertical bait block columns are used, each slot 132 supports a respective column of bait blocks. In the illustrated embodiment, where vertical columns of bait blocks are used, it is the longer slots 132 in the rear wall 116 that are utilized. It is understood that any number and

combination of the longer slots 132 may be used to support bait block columns within the scope of this invention. In a particularly suitable embodiment, the frame members 153 are configured to support the vertical columns of bait blocks 156 up off of the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 of the base 104 (i.e., above the floor of the rodent management station 100) to inhibit water that drains along the inner surface of the bottom panel from contacting the bait blocks.

[00192] It is also understood that the provision of multiple slots 132 (shorter and longer) along the rear wall of the base 104 allows for various combinations of horizontal rows of bait blocks and vertical columns of bait blocks. For example, one or more horizontal bait block rows may be supported by suitable frame members mounted 153 in the innermost pair of shorter slots, with additional vertical columns of bait blocks supported by the respective frame members 153 mounted in each of the outermost longer slots.

[00193] With particular reference now to Fig. 18, the rodent management station 100 is suitably modular to permit a snap trap 170 (e.g., a conventional mouse trap) to be placed in the bait chamber. The snap trap 170 depicted in Fig. 18 is similar in design to one commercially available from Kness Manufacturing Company, Inc. of Albia, Iowa. In such a configuration of the rodent management station 100, bait blocks 156 may be supported on the rear wall of the base 104 as described previously, or the snap trap 170 may be baited in a manner known in the art with the bait blocks omitted. In another embodiment, bait blocks 156 may be supported on either side of the snap trap 170. In one particularly suitable embodiment the snap trap 170 is disposed and oriented in the bait chamber 138 with a portion of the trigger mechanism of the snap trap extending through the bait chamber entryway into the passageway outside the bait chamber (as best seen in Figs. 20 and 21). In this manner, bait may be placed on the trap 170 (or on the rear wall 116 as in the previous embodiments) to allow the rodent to smell and in some instances see the bait through the through-openings formed in the interior panels 112. As the rodent continues along the passageway in search of the bait, the rodent must cross over the trigger mechanism of the snap trap. In particular, the rodent is prevented from continued travel along the passageway to the opposite entry opening 102 without crossing over the trigger mechanism of the snap trap. While an exemplary snap trap 170 is depicted in Figures

18 and 19, it is understood that other suitable snap traps may be used within the scope of this invention.

[00194] A horizontal frame 172 (broadly, a “trap placement member”) such as a wire frame or other suitable frame construction is secured within the rodent management station 100, such as by being mounted to the rear wall 116 in the same manner as the bait supports 158 used to support the bait in Figs. 13-17. This facilitates reconfiguration of the rodent management station 100 to incorporate the snap trap 170. The horizontal frame 172 has a plurality of connecting members in spaced relationship with each other and configured for releasable disposition within the slots 132 in the rear wall 116 to releasably connect the horizontal frame to the base. Moreover, the connecting members and the slots 132 are configured for sliding movement of the connecting members within the slots.

[00195] The illustrated horizontal frame 172 generally forms a loop having a central opening that coincides with the perimeter of a base 174 of the snap trap 170 for receiving the snap trap within the frame in closely spaced relationship whereby the frame retains the snap trap against sliding or other movement of the trap within the rodent management station 100. In other embodiments the snap trap 170 may be affixed or releasably secured to the frame 172 by suitable fasteners or adhesives. In still other embodiments, the base 174 of the snap trap may have a recess formed into its perimeter. The frame 172 in such an embodiment may then rest in the recess to retain the snap trap in position within the rodent management station.

[00196] The modular configurability of the rodent management station 100 further allows what is commonly referred to as a “live trap” to be placed in the rodent management station instead of (e.g., interchangeably with, although it is contemplated that it may be in addition to) the snap trap 170 of Fig. 20. Live traps are traps designed to trap a rodent, typically a mouse, within an enclosure without having to poison or immediately kill the rodent. One suitable embodiment of a live trap configured for use within the rodent management station 100 is illustrated in Figs. 22-24 and generally indicated at 200. It is understood, however, that other live trap configurations may be used within the rodent management station and remain within the scope of this invention. Moreover, the live trap 200 is removable from the station

100 when the station is in the opened configuration to permit servicing/cleaning of the station.

[00197] The illustrated live trap 200 (as best seen in Fig. 22) has an enlarged chamber portion 201 configured to seat within the bait chamber 138 of the rodent management station 100, and a narrowed entry portion (broadly, an “inlet” or “inlet portion”) 203 extending from the chamber portion. While not visible in the drawings, the entry portion 203 may also extend partially into the interior of the chamber portion such that rodents exit the entry portion into the chamber portion more centrally within the interior of the chamber portion 201 of the live trap 200. The live trap 200 suitably has a front generally adjacent or including the entry portion 203 and a rear opposite the front. Thus, with the live trap 200 disposed within the housing of the rodent management station 100, the entry portion 203 of the live trap 100 may extend at least up to and in some embodiments through the bait chamber 138 entryway out into the passageway 109 along which rodents are guided within the rodent management station. At least one and more suitably a pair of entry openings 202 are formed in the entry portion 203 of the live trap 200 to permit entry of rodents such as mice into the trap at a location that is separate (e.g., distally spaced from) the entry openings 106 of the station 100. The entry openings 202 are in a generally opposes, spaced relationship with each other. These entry openings 202 are also out of directional alignment with each of the entry openings 102 of the station 100. Moreover, the pair of entry openings 202 may be positioned such that one entry opening is open to the first pathway 103 section of the passageway 109 (described above) while the other entry opening is open to the second pathway section of the passageway.

[00198] In one embodiment, the live trap 200 is located and held in place within the rodent management station by stabilizing members 204 disposed on and more suitably formed integrally with the exterior of the live trap 200 generally along the sides of the chamber portion 201. These stabilizing members 204 abut against the interior panels 112 depending from the lid 106 when the lid is closed to provide stability and support to the live trap 200 against movement within the housing. The contact between the stabilizing members 204 and the interior panels 112 also increases the structural rigidity of the lid 106 and in particular of the interior panels.

[00199] Additionally, or alternatively, the live trap 200 may include guide ribs 206 (Figs. 25 and 26) (broadly, “connecting tabs) attached to the rearward facing side of the trap. These guide ribs 206 are configured to slide into respective ones of the slots 132 via the open upper ends of the slots in the rear wall 116 of the base 104 for releasably connecting the live trap with the base of the station 100 housing and for accurately positioning the live trap within the bait chamber 138 of the rodent management station. The guide ribs 206 and slots 132 of the rear wall 116 thus each broadly define a connecting member used to connect the live trap with the base of the station 100 housing. It is thus understood that in alternative embodiments suitable slots may be provided on the live trap 200 while guide ribs 206 (i.e., connecting tabs) are disposed on the rear wall 116 of the base 104 to connect the live trap with the base.

[00200] A variety of suitable interchangeable internal trap mechanisms may be used within the live trap 200, and in particular in the entry portion 203 of the trap, to trap rodents within the chamber portion 201 of the trap. The variety of trap mechanisms may be interchanged and selectively removed and placed within the live trap 200.

[00201] For example, in one embodiment the internal trap mechanism may comprise a ramp mechanism 210 as illustrated in Figs. 27 and 28. The ramp mechanism 210 comprises a ramp 212 extending longitudinally within the entry portion 203 of the live trap 200 and having an entry end nearest the entry openings 202 of the trap and an exit end nearest the chamber portion 201 of the trap. The ramp is mounted on the floor of the live trap for pivoting movement. A trap door 214 is pivotally connected to the ramp 212 generally adjacent the entry end of the ramp by a suitable pivot pin 216. A spring, weight or other device is used to bias the ramp in a position in which the ramp slants upward as illustrated in Fig. 28 with the entry end of the ramp down near the floor of the live trap 200. In this position, the trap door lays generally flat against the ramp to permit a rodent that enters the trap to proceed up the ramp over the trap door.

[00202] As the rodent proceeds past the trap door 214, the weight of the rodent causes the ramp 212 to pivot downward (i.e., to pivot the exit end downward). This pivoting of the ramp 212 causes the entry end of the ramp to rise, pushing the

trap door 214 to pivot about the pin 216 to an upright position (not shown) within the entry portion of the trap thus preventing the rodent from turning around and exiting the trap. The rodent must therefore continue past the ramp 212 and into the chamber portion 201 of the live trap. Once the rodent is off of the ramp 212, the ramp returns to its initial position (Fig. 28) with the trap door 214 again lying generally flat against the ramp. In particularly suitable embodiments, adhesive such as in the form of a glue board, may be disposed on the floor of the chamber portion 201 of the live trap 200 to inhibit further movement of the rodent once it enters the chamber portion, or at least travels to a particular area within the chamber portion such as away from the entrance to the chamber portion.

[00203] Figures 29 and 31 illustrate an alternative trap mechanism, referred to herein as a swinging gate mechanism 220. The swinging gate mechanism 220 comprises a gate 222 that is pivotably attached by a pivot pin 224 to the roof of the live trap 200 and depending therefrom within the entry portion 203 of the trap, suitably near the entry openings 202 to the trap. The gate 222 is suitably sized in length longer than the interior height of the entry portion 203 of the trap 200 so that in its initial position it contacts the floor of the trap in a slightly angled orientation of the gate 222. In this manner, the gate 222 is capable of swinging only one way, i.e., inward toward the chamber portion of the trap. In the illustrated embodiment, the gate 222 also has teeth 226 positioned along its free edge. In some embodiments, the gate 222 may have slots disposed therein, thus enabling light to pass through the gate mechanism 220.

[00204] As the rodent enters the live trap 200 with the swinging gate mechanism 220 they come into contact with the gate 222 and cause it to rotate upward about the pivot pin 224. If the rodent attempts to retreat from the trap 200 while passing beneath the gate 222, the teeth 226 at the free end of the gate bite into the rodent to discourage such rearward movement. After the rodent has cleared the gate 222, the door pivots back to its initial state, thus blocking any retreat by the rodent. While teeth 226 are depicted in Figs. 29 and 31 as being positioned along the free edge of the gate 222, they may be positioned along any portion of the swing door.

[00205] In other embodiments an additional swing door positioned in front of the gate 222 may be provided. In such an embodiment, the additional swing door

does not have teeth and is sized to permit the swinging of the door in both directions within the swinging gate mechanism 220. The rodent is thus able to exit through this additional door before coming into contact with the gate 222. The rodent is encouraged by this additional door that it is capable of retreat from the trap and to thus continue through the next door, which is the gate 222. The additional swing door and gate 222 generally function in the same manner. Like the gate 222, the additional swing door may have slots positioned in any portion therein.

[00206] With reference to Figs. 31 and 32, another live trap mechanism is referred to herein as a funnel trap mechanism 230 comprising a funnel 232 that sits within the entry portion 203 of the live trap 200 and has a first or entry end 231 nearest the entry openings 202 of the trap and an exit end 233 nearest the chamber portion of the trap. The funnel 232 more suitably comprises a rigid segment 236 extending longitudinally downstream from the entry end 231 of the funnel and a flexible segment comprising a plurality of fingers 234 attached to and extending longitudinally downstream from the rigid segment of the funnel to the exit end 233 thereof. The rigid segment 236 of the illustrated funnel 232 is generally cylindrical or rectangular in shape with a constant cross-sectional area along its length. Although it is understood that the rigid segment 236 may be shaped other than cylindrical or rectangular, and may be of non-uniform cross-section, without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00207] The fingers 234 are configured to angle inward (relative to the centerline of the funnel) toward each other such that the exit end 233 of the funnel 232 is substantially narrower than the entry end 231 of the funnel. The fingers 234 are suitably flexible and resilient to permit outward bending of the fingers against the bias thereof as the rodent passes through the flexible segment of the funnel to the exit end 233 of the funnel. As a rodent moves through the exit end 233 of the funnel, the bias of the fingers 234 causes the tips of the fingers to remain in contact with the body of the rodent. If the rodent tries to reverse course, the tips of the fingers 234 dig into or otherwise apply pressure to the rodent, thereby encouraging the rodent to continue moving forward to the chamber portion of the trap. Once the rodent exits the funnel 232, the fingers 234 return to their initial position, thus rendering the exit end 233 of

the funnel too narrow for the rodent's head to fit through and the rodent is thus discouraged against attempts to move back through the funnel.

[00208] As illustrated in the embodiment of Fig. 22, bait such as the bait blocks 156 may be disposed within the bait chamber along with the live trap 200, such as above the chamber portion 201 of the live trap. The bait blocks 156 serve to lure the rodent into the rodent management station and toward the live trap and/or bait chamber 138. In such an embodiment, the live trap 200 may be sized, particularly at the entry openings 202 of the trap, to allow only smaller rodents such as mice to enter the live trap. Larger rodents such as rats will climb over the top of the live trap 200 into the bait chamber 138 and feed on the bait which may be sufficiently toxic to kill the rat. Additionally, non-toxic baits (e.g., monitoring baits) may be used in the rodent management station 100. Monitoring bait is a non-toxic substance that indicates the presence of rodents by virtue of it being consumed by rodents over a period of time.

[00209] Figs. 38-78 illustrate another embodiment of a rodent management station 1100. The rodent management station 1100 is similar to the rodent management station 100, including in general a base 1104 and lid 1106 (together, broadly defining a housing of the rodent management station and an interior space of the housing), transversely opposite entry openings 1102, and interior panels 1112 (broadly, partition structure) that partition the interior space of the housing into a generally central bait chamber 1138 and a passageway 1109 including a pair of pathways 1103 each leading from a respective one of the entry openings 1102 to an entryway of the bait chamber. In the closed configuration of the lid 1106, the lid and base 1104 are releasably held together by a suitable locking mechanism 1142, similar to locking mechanism 142 described above, to inhibit unauthorized or unintended opening of the rodent management station 1100.

[00210] The rear wall 1116 (broadly, an upstanding wall) of the base 1104 includes an inner surface having elongate, vertically extending slots 1132 formed therein. The slots 1132 are spaced laterally apart from each other along the inner surface of the rear wall, and may be of uniform length but are more suitably of varying lengths with some of the slots 1132 being longer than others. Each of the slots 1132 is open at the top of the rear wall and extends down to a location generally

intermediate the top and bottom of the rear wall (for the shorter slots) or to adjacent the bottom of the rear wall (e.g., just above the inner surface of the bottom panel, for the longer slots). Moreover, the slots 1132 may have varying diameters along their respective lengths, such that the diameter of the slot decreases or tapers as it extends downward toward the bottom panel 1114 of the base 1104. As described in further detail later herein, the slots 1132 are configured to retain one or more bait supports therein for supporting bait within the interior space of the station 1100 housing.

[00211] As best seen in Fig. 38, the lid 1106 of the rodent management station of this embodiment further comprises depending guard structure 1300 configured and located on the lid such that in the closed configuration of the station 1100 the guard structure substantially encloses or otherwise guards the open upper ends of the slots 1132, and the bait supports disposed therein, to inhibit rodents against manipulating the bait supports (e.g., bending or pulling) and removing the bait therefrom. The illustrated guard structure 1300 comprises a plurality of generally V-shaped ribs formed integrally with and depending from the lid 1106 and transversely spaced relationship with each other. For example, in one particularly suitable embodiment the number of V-shaped ribs 1300 corresponds to the number of bait supports (e.g., four in the illustrated embodiment of Fig. 38) used in the rodent management station 1100. It is understood, however, that the guard structure 1300 may be of any suitable configuration without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00212] While not visible in the drawings, in some embodiments at least a portion of the inner surface 1118 of the bottom panel 1114 of the station 1100 housing (i.e., the floor of the housing) may be textured in the same manner as the inner surface 1118 of the bottom panel 114 of the station 100 housing of the first embodiment. As illustrated in Figs. 38 and 39, one or more demarcations 1111 may be provided on the inner surface 1118 of the bottom panel 1114 to indicate where the interior panels 1112 are located in the closed configuration of the station 1100. The demarcations 1111 facilitate proper alignment of the bait and traps within the bait chamber 1138 of the station 1100 housing to avoid interference with lid 1106 and in particular the interior panels 1112 upon closing the lid. The demarcations 1111 may be in any suitable form such as, without limitation, indicia, different coloring from the inner surface 1118 of

the bottom panel 1114, labels, different texturing from the texture of the inner surface of the bottom panel, a raised member, a groove, or other suitable demarcation.

[00213] The bait system and in particular the bait supports 1158 of the rodent management station 1100 of this embodiment are also different from the bait supports 158 of the previous station 100. Suitable bait support configurations for this second embodiment are illustrated in Figs. 38-55, and in particular with respect to such supports for retaining bait blocks 1156 or other bait in generally vertical (e.g., stacked) configurations. It is understood, however, that the bait supports of this embodiment may also be configured to retain bait blocks 1156 or other bait in a general horizontal alignment as in the previous embodiment without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00214] As one example, with particular reference to Figure 41, one suitable bait support 1158 is illustrated in the form of a bait tray 1322 having upstanding walls 1324 that extend upwardly from a horizontal bottom 1326 of the bait tray 1322 to form a trough 1330. A vertical wall 1328 is coupled to and extends upward from the bottom 1326. A liquid attractant, bait, or poisonous substance is placed within the trough 1330. In other embodiments, pelletized or other solid forms of attractant, bait, or poisonous substances may be disposed in the trough 1326. In use within the interior space of the station 1100 housing and more particularly within the bait chamber of the housing, the trough 1326 is open to the interior space of the housing so that rodents may feed from the trough.

[00215] With reference now to Fig. 38A, the upstanding rear wall 1116 of the base 1104 and more suitably an outer panel 1119 of the rear wall in the multiple construction of the illustrated embodiment, may include at least one and more suitably two or more mounting ports 1130 separate from the rodent entry openings 1102. As illustrated in Fig. 38A, in one embodiment the outer panel 1119 has two pairs of mounting ports 1130 disposed therein in spaced relationship with each other. One pair of mounting ports 1130 are in vertical alignment with each other, while the other pair is in horizontal alignment. Providing at least a pair of mounting ports 1130 permits strap or cable-type fasteners to be used to secure the base 1104 to a mounting surface such as a post, slat or chain-link fence.

[00216] In one particularly suitable embodiment, a movable closure 1131 is removably connected to the outer panel 1119 of the rear wall 1116 at each respective mounting port 1130. For example, the movable closure 1131 is removable from the outer panel 1119 to expose a respective one of the mounting ports 1130. More suitably, the movable closure 1131 comprises a frangible closure such as a knock-out plate. It is understood, however, that the closures 1131 may be omitted such that the mounting ports 1130 are permanently open.

[00217] The bait support 1158 further comprises (still referring to Fig. 41) a mounting pin 1340 disposed on the backside of the vertical wall 1328 for releasably connecting the bait support with the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104. The mounting pin 1340 is suitably connected to the vertical wall 1328 by a connecting web 1342. More suitably the mounting pin 1340 and connecting web 1342 are formed integrally with the vertical wall 1328 of the bait support 1158. It is understood, however, that the mounting pin 1340 may be connected to the vertical wall 1328 by any suitable technique and remain within the scope of this invention. The illustrated mounting pin 1340 is suitably generally cylindrical in accordance with the cross-sectional shape of the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104. More suitably, the illustrated mounting pin 1340 is generally tubular, having a central bore 1344 extending therethrough for reasons which will become apparent.

[00218] In this second embodiment of a rodent management station 1100, the height of the bait above the floor of the housing as supported by the bait support 1158 is suitably adjustable. For example, in one embodiment illustrated in Figs. 52-55, a riser 1500 (broadly, a height adjustment member) is used to support the bait support 1158 at an increased height within the interior space of the station 1100 housing. The illustrated riser couples the bait tray 1322 to the rear wall 1116 of the rodent management station 1100.

[00219] Figs. 42-51 depict another embodiment of a suitable bait support 1400 for the rodent management station 1100 of this second embodiment. The bait support 1400 is configured for releasable connection with the rear wall 1116 of the station 1100 and for sliding movement within the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104. The bait support 1400 suitably includes a generally horizontal platform 1410 configured for a generally horizontal orientation extending outward

relative to the rear wall 1116 into the interior space and more particularly the bait chamber of the station 1100 housing. A vertical wall 1420 extends up from the platform 1410 in the same manner as the vertical wall 1328 of the bait support 1158 of Fig. 41. The transition of the platform 1410 to the vertical wall 1420 is suitably rounded, or curved, to inhibit bait particles or other debris from accumulating on the bait support 1158 and to clean the bait support 1400.

[00220] The platform 1410 of the bait support 1400 has an opening 1430 disposed therein and sized to releasably retain a bait pin 1450 (or bait rod 1460 as discussed later herein) that extends up from the platform 1410 of the bait support. Both the bait pin 1450 and the bait rod 1460 are broadly referred to herein as “bait mounting pins.” The illustrated bait pin 1450 is configured to position and locate bait blocks 1156 in a generally fixed arrangement with respect to the bait support device 1400. The bait pin 1450 has a diameter that is suitably configured so that bait blocks having an opening formed therein may be positioned on the bait pin such that the bait pin passes through the openings formed in the bait blocks 1156. The bait blocks are thus securely positioned and a rodent is unable to carry away a bait block from the rodent management station 1100.

[00221] The bait pin 1450 (as best seen in Figs. 43 and 44) has an expanded portion 1452 at or adjacent a lower segment 1454 of the bait pin to serve as a stop upon insertion of the bait pin in the platform opening 1430. Accordingly, the expanded portion 1452 of the bait pin 1450 suitably has at least one cross-sectional dimension that is greater than a diameter of the opening 1430. The lower segment 1454 of the bait pin 1450 is thus able to fit within the opening 1430, while the expanded portion 1452 inhibits the segment of the bait pin above the expanded portion 1452 from passing therethrough. In one particularly suitable embodiment, the lower segment 1454 of the bait pin 1450 is suitably sized and configured for a general friction or press fit of the lower segment with the platform 1410 within the opening 1430 to permit releasable connection of the bait pin with the bait support 1400. In other embodiments, the bait pin 1450 may be releasably connected with the bait support 1400 by adhesive, mechanical fastening or other suitable technique without departing from the scope of this invention. It is also contemplated that in alternative

embodiments the bait pin 1450 may instead be permanently connected to the bait support 1400.

[00222] The bait support 1400 further comprises a mounting pin 1440 (Fig. 42) disposed on the backside of the vertical wall 1420 for releasably connecting the bait support with the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104. The mounting pin 1440 is suitably connected to the vertical wall 1420 by a connecting web 1442. More suitably the mounting pin 1440 and connecting web 1442 are formed integrally with the vertical wall 1420 of the bait support 1400. It is understood, however, that the mounting pin 1440 may be connected to the vertical wall 1420 by any suitable technique and remain within the scope of this invention. The illustrated mounting pin 1440 is suitably generally cylindrical in accordance with the cross-sectional shape of the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104 to permit the mounting pin to be inserted down through the open upper end and into a respective one of the slots 1132. In a more suitable embodiment, the mounting pin 1440 is generally tubular, having a central bore 1444.

[00223] With reference to Figs 49-51, an annular protrusion 1470 depends from the underside of the platform 1410 in coaxial alignment with the opening 1430 and having an inner cross-sectional dimension that is substantially the same as that of the opening. While the annular protrusion 1470 has a circular outer cross-section, other embodiments may have differently shaped outer cross-sections (e.g., square, oblong, or rectangular). Moreover, the inner cross-sectional dimension of the circular protrusion 1470 may be either larger or smaller than that of the opening 1430. The annular protrusion 1470 functions at least in part to further support the lower segment 1454 of the bait pin 1450 and the lower segment 1466 of the bait rod 1460.

[00224] As illustrated in Fig. 51, the vertical wall 1420 of the bait support 1400 has ribs 1478 formed on a back surface 1432 thereof. The platform 1410 has similar ribs (not shown) formed on a respective under-surface 1411. The ribs 1478 and the ribs on the under-surface 1411 increase the structural rigidity of the bait support device 1400. The bait support 1400 also has an upper notch 1480 and a lower notch 1482 formed therein, as illustrated in Fig. 51 for purposes which will become apparent. In the illustrated embodiment, the notches 1480 and 1482 are formed at least in part by recesses formed into the respective back surface 1432 and under-

surface 1411. The notches 1480 and 1482 may also at least in part be defined by the ribs 1478 formed in the back surface 1432 and/or the under-surface 1411. Although not illustrated in Fig. 41, the bait tray 1322 comprises similar notches 1480 and 1482.

[00225] With reference to Figs. 52-55, the height of the bait above the floor of the housing as supported by the bait support 1400 is selectively adjustable. For example, in one embodiment, a riser 1500 (broadly, a height adjustment member) is used to support the bait support 1400 at an increased height above the inner surface of the bottom panel within the interior space of the station 1100 housing. The illustrated riser 1500 is suitably configured for disposition, at least in part, within one of the slots 1132 and beneath the mounting pin 1440 of the bait support 1400 to support the mounting pin higher up within the slot (and hence the bait support within the interior space of the station 1100 housing) than if the riser is omitted. More particularly, the riser 1500 of Figs. 52-55 comprises an elongate post including a lower segment 1502 having a first diameter and an upper segment 1504 having a second diameter that is less than the first diameter (e.g., of the lower segment). In particular, the second diameter of the upper segment 1504 is sized for insertion in the opening 1444 of the mounting pin 1440 of the bait support 1400 (or, e.g., the opening 1344 in the bait tray 1322) to couple the bait support with the riser. It is understood, however, that the upper segment of the riser post may be omitted without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00226] The lower segment 1502 of the riser 1500 post has an upper annular flange 1506 separating the upper segment 1504 from the lower segment, and a lower annular flange 1508 longitudinally spaced-apart from the upper annular flange 1506 and generally at or adjacent the lower end of the riser post. The annular flanges 1506, 1508 are sized in cross-section in accordance with the cross-sectional dimensions of the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104 positively seat and retain the riser 1500 within the slot with little translational movement of the riser therein. In a particularly suitable embodiment, the cross-sectional dimension (e.g., the diameter in the illustrated embodiment) of the lower annular flange 1508 is sized to correspond to the cross-sectional dimension of the slot 1132 at a particular depth along the length of the slot (e.g., where the slot dimensions decrease toward the lower end of the slot), thus setting the riser at a predetermined height within the slot.

[00227] An upper arm 1510 extends transversely outward from the riser 1500 post and more particularly from the upper segment 1506 thereof just above the upper annular flange 1506. The upper arm is sized in width to seat within the upper notch 1480 of the bait support 1400 to further support the bait support on the riser. A lower arm 1520 also extends transversely outward from the riser 1500 post, for example, at the lower end thereof, and is suitably sized and configured to fit within and/or engage the lower notch 1482 of the bait support 1400. An assembly of the bait support device 1400 and riser 1500 is illustrated in Fig. 47. It is understood, however, that either of the upper arm 1510 and lower arm 1520 may be omitted without departing from the scope of this invention. It is also understood that the riser 1500 may be configured other than as illustrated and remain within the scope of this invention as long it supports the bait support 1400 at a height within the interior space of the station 1100 housing higher than the bait support is disposed absent the riser.

[00228] The length of the lower segment 1502 and/or the upper segment 1504 of the riser 1500 post thus dictates the vertical position (i.e., height above the floor of the station 1100 housing) of the bait support 1400 (or bait tray 1322), and by extension the bait blocks 1156 placed thereon, within the rodent management station 1100. The riser 1500 thus functions as a height adjustment member and is configured for selective adjustment of the height of the bait support 1400 above the floor of the station 1100. Accordingly, different risers (not shown) of alternative lengths or different configurations may be provided to permit selective height adjustment of the bait support 1400 (or bait tray 1322). The riser 1500 may be constructed out of any suitable material, such as plastic, metal, or a combination of materials.

[00229] Using a riser 1500 that is disposed within one of the slots 1132 allows the bait support 1400 to be supported above the floor of the station 1100 housing in spaced relationship therewith, e.g., without the riser structure being interposed between the bait support and the floor. As such, a live trap may readily seat below the bait support 1400 so that both the live trap and bait may be disposed within the bait chamber. Additionally, with the live trap removed from the bait chamber and the lid 1106 in the opened configuration of the station 1100 the floor of the station is readily cleaned by sweeping or brushing beneath the bait supports 1400 without having to remove the bait supports from the station.

[00230] Fig. 45 depicts the bait support 1400 utilizing a bait rod 1460 instead of the bait pin 1450 of Fig. 42. Like the bait pin 1450, the bait rod 1460 is configured to position and locate bait blocks 1156 in a generally fixed arrangement on the platform of the bait support 1400. The bait rod 1460 has a diameter that is suitably configured so that bait blocks 1156 having an opening formed therein may be positioned on the bait rod such that the bait rod passes through the openings formed in the bait blocks. The bait blocks 1156 are thus securely positioned and a rodent is unable to carry away a bait block from the rodent management station 1100. The bait rod 1460 (as best seen in Figs. 45 and 46) has an annular collar 1464 positioned at or near a lower segment 1466 of the bait rod to serve as a stop upon insertion of the bait rod into the platform opening 1430. The annular collar 1464 is formed according to any suitable method, such as during the molding or manufacturing of the bait rod 1460. For example, if the bait rod 1460 is formed in an injection molding process, the annular collar 1464 is formed in the same operation. In other embodiments, the annular collar 1464 may be formed as a separate component and suitably fastened or coupled to the bait rod 1460 by press fit, adhesive or other suitable connection.

[00231] The bait rod 1460 has a tapered upper end 1462 to facilitate loading of the bait blocks 1156 on the bait rod 1460. It is understood that the upper end 1462 may be tapered other than as illustrated, or remain untapered in the manner of the bait pin 1450, without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00232] Fig. 47 illustrates two bait blocks 1156 positioned on the bait support device 1400 using the bait rod 1460. The bait blocks suitably rest on the platform 1410 and be stacked in vertical alignment with support from the bait rod 1460. The platform thus supports the bait blocks and provides substantial support surface for the bait blocks such that in hot environments where bait can become softened the bait does not melt and flow down onto the floor of the station 1100 housing.

[00233] Figs. 72-74 illustrate another embodiment of a suitable bait support, indicated generally at 1600 for the rodent management station 1100. The bait support 1600 is used to support bait blocks 1156 in a vertically stacked arrangement and has a shaped-wire seat 1640 on which bait is supported in spaced relationship above the floor of the station 1100 housing. The bait support 1600 of this embodiment is

formed from a metal or plastic wire and has a circular cross-section, as shown in Fig. 72. In other embodiments, the cross-section of the bait support 1600 may be other than circular, such as square, rectangular, or oblong. Moreover, the cross-sectional shape may be different at different segments along the bait support 1600.

[00234] The illustrated bait support 1600 has a mounting end 1610 that slides into and down to the bottom of the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104 to releasably connect the bait support with the rear wall. The bait support 1600 extends outward and upward from the mounting end 1610 (i.e., away from the rear wall 1116 of the base panel 1104) and forms a coiled support portion 1640 (i.e., a shaped-wire seat) on which bait blocks 1156 are supported. A vertically oriented post 1620 (broadly, a “wire pin”) extends up from the coiled support portion 1640 and is configured to receive the bait blocks 1156. The coiled support portion 1640 is generally circular when viewed from above as in Fig. 73 and accordingly provides an increased surface area for supporting the bait blocks.

[00235] Figs. 75-78 illustrate yet another embodiment of a suitable bait support, generally indicated at 1700. This bait support is also used for supporting bait blocks 1156 in a vertically stacked arrangement. The bait support 1700 may be formed from a metal or plastic wire and has a circular cross-section, as shown in Fig. 75. In other embodiments, the cross-section of the bait support 1700 may be other than circular, such as square, rectangular, or oblong. Moreover, the cross-sectional shape may be different at different segments along the bait support 1700.

[00236] The bait support 1700 has a mounting end 1710 that slides into and down to the bottom of the slots 1132 in the rear wall 1116 of the base 1104 to releasably connect the bait support with the rear wall. The bait support 1700 extends outward and upward from the mounting end 1710 (i.e., away from the rear wall 1116 of the base panel 1104) and forms a coiled support portion 1740 (i.e., a seat) on which bait blocks 1156 are supported. A vertically oriented post 1720 extends upward from the coiled support portion 1740 and is configured to receive bait blocks 1156 thereon. The bait support 1700 is thus configured to support bait blocks 1156 in spaced relationship above the inner surface 1118 of the bottom panel 1114 of the rodent management station 1100. Moreover, when compared to the bait support 1600, the bait support 1700 vertically positions the bait blocks 1156 a greater distance above the

inner surface 1118 of the bottom panel 1114. This increased distance permits the live trap 1200 to be positioned in between the coiled support portion 1740 and the bottom panel 1114. Accordingly, the bait support device 1700 may be used either alone or in conjunction with the live trap 1200. In such an embodiment, the live trap may be used to trap mice while the bait is used to treat other rodents (e.g., rats) that are too large to enter the live trap. The coiled support portion 1740 is generally circular when viewed from above as in Fig. 78 and accordingly has an increased surface area for supporting bait blocks 1156.

[00237] Figs. 56-69 illustrate one suitable live trap 1200 for the rodent management station 1100 of this embodiment. The live trap 1200 is generally similar to the live trap 200 of the first embodiment, and it is understood that the live trap of this embodiment may be used in the rodent management station 100 without departing from the scope of this invention. In this embodiment, the live trap 1200 has an enlarged trap portion 1209 configured to seat within the bait chamber of the rodent management station 1100, and a narrowed entry portion (broadly, an “inlet” or “inlet portion”) 1208 extending from the trap portion. While not visible in the drawings, the entry portion 1208 may also extend partially into the interior of the trap portion 1209 such that rodents exit the entry portion into the trap portion more centrally within the interior of the trap portion of the live trap 1200. The live trap 1200 suitably has a front generally adjacent or including the entry portion 1208 and a rear opposite the front. Thus, with the live trap 1200 disposed within the housing of the rodent management station 1100, the entry portion 1208 of the live trap may extend at least up to and in some embodiments through the bait chamber entryway out into the passageway along which rodents are guided within the rodent management station.

[00238] The live trap 1200 of this embodiment has an entry opening 1202 of disposed at the end of the entry portion 1208 of the live trap. Moreover, as seen in Figs. 56 and 57, the side walls of live trap 1200 curve outward and are substantially rounded where the entry portion 1208 meets or transitions to the remainder of the live trap 1200 (i.e., to the trap portion 1209). The illustrated live trap 1200 of this embodiment also includes vent openings in the form of upper vent holes 1210 (Fig. 63) in an upper surface 1209 of the live trap and side vent holes 1212 (Figs. 66 and 67) along the rear 1211 of the live trap 1200. The upper vent holes 1210 and side

vent holes 1212 are more suitably located at the trap portion 1209 of the live trap 1200 and sized to inhibit the passage of a rodent therethrough and as such are substantially smaller than the entry opening 1202 of the live trap 1200, while still permitting the passage of air, light, and particulates between the interior (i.e., trap portion) of the live trap and fluid communication therebetween. Providing the vent holes in this manner entices rodents (after trapping) to move into the trap portion 1209 and more suitably away from where the entry portion 1208 opens into the trap portion. It is understood, however, that vent openings 1210, 1212 may be located on the live trap 1200 other than as illustrated and remain within the scope of this invention.

[00239] A variety of suitable internal trap mechanisms may be used within the live trap 1200, and in particular within the entry portion 1208 of the live trap, to trap rodents within the trap portion 1209 thereof. For example, in one embodiment the internal trap mechanism may comprise a ramp mechanism 1214 as illustrated in Figs. 56, 58, and 59. The ramp mechanism 1214 comprises a ramp 1216 extending longitudinally within the tunnel portion 1208 of the live trap 1200 and having an entry end nearest the entry opening 1202 of the trap and an exit end nearest the enclosure portion of the trap. The ramp 1216 is mounted on the floor of the live trap 1200 for pivoting movement. A trap door 1218 is pivotally connected to the ramp generally adjacent the entry end of the ramp by a suitable pivot pin 1219. A spring, weight or other device is used to bias the ramp 1216 in a position in which the ramp slants upward as illustrated in Fig. 59 with the entry end of the ramp down near the floor of the live trap 1200. In this position, the trap door 1218 lays generally flat against the ramp 1216 to permit a rodent that enters the trap to proceed up the ramp over the trap door.

[00240] As the rodent proceeds past the trap door 1218, the weight of the rodent causes the ramp 1216 to pivot downward (i.e., to pivot the exit end downward). This pivoting of the ramp 1216 causes the entry end of the ramp to rise, pushing the trap door to pivot about the pin 1219 to an upright position (not shown) within the tunnel portion 1208 of the trap 1200 thus preventing the rodent from turning around and exiting the trap. The rodent must therefore continue past the ramp 1216 and into the enclosure portion of the live trap 1200. Once the rodent is off of the ramp 1216,

the ramp returns to its initial position (Fig. 59) with the trap door 1218 again lying generally flat against the ramp. In particularly suitable embodiments, adhesive such as in the form of a glue board, may be disposed on the floor of the enclosure portion of the live trap 1200 to inhibit further movement of the rodent once it enters the enclosure portion, or at least travels to a particular area within the enclosure portion such as away from the entrance of the tunnel portion 1208 into the enclosure portion.

[00241] In some embodiments, the ramp 1216 is not utilized. In these embodiments, the trap door (broadly, a “gate”) 1218 is pivotable generally between an up position in which the gate generally closes off the entry opening 1202 of the live trap 1200 from the remainder of the trap and a down position in which a rodent can pass from the entry opening through the tunnel portion 1208 of the trap. Figs. 59 and 65 illustrate a number of depending protrusions (broadly, “blocking members”) 1217 which extend downward from the upper surface 1209 of the live trap 1200. The depending protrusions 1217 prevent a rodent which has reached the enclosure portion of the live trap 1200 from tampering or manipulating the trap mechanism to escape from the live trap. In embodiments utilizing the trap door 1218, the depending protrusions are disposed generally above the trap door in the up position thereof and may be arranged longitudinally along the tunnel portion 1208 from a position intermediate the entry opening 1202 and the trap door 1218 in the up position to location past the trap door in the position. In the embodiments utilizing the ramp 1216, the depending protrusions 1217 prevent the rodent from pivoting the ramp 1216 and opening gate 1218 to a position past the pivot point 1219 where the gate will not close when the rodent steps off of and releases the ramp to return to its natural resting position. Furthermore, the depending protrusions 1217 are suitably used with any of the trap mechanisms discussed herein and function in a similar manner to prevent rodents from manipulating the live trap mechanism after they have passed therethrough.

[00242] With reference to Figs. 60, 61, and 62, another live trap mechanism is referred to herein as a funnel trap mechanism 1230 comprising a funnel 1232. The funnel 1232 sits within the tunnel portion 1208 of the live trap 1200 and has a first or entry end 1231 nearest the entry opening 1202 of the trap and an exit end 1233 nearest the enclosure portion of the trap. The funnel 1232 more suitably comprises a rigid

segment 1236 extend longitudinally downstream from the entry end 1231 of the funnel and a flexible segment comprising a plurality of fingers 1234 attached to and extending longitudinally downstream from the rigid segment of the funnel to the exit end 1233 thereof. The rigid segment 1236 of the illustrated funnel 1232 is generally cylindrical or rectangular in shape with a constant cross-sectional area along its length. Although it is understood that the rigid segment 1236 may be shaped other than cylindrical or rectangular, and may be of non-uniform cross-section, without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00243] The fingers 1234 are configured to angle inward (relative to the centerline of the funnel 1232) toward each other such that the exit end 1233 of the funnel is substantially narrower than the entry end 1231 of the funnel. The fingers 1234 are suitably flexible and resilient to permit outward bending of the fingers against the bias thereof as the rodent passes through the flexible segment of the funnel to the exit end 1233 of the funnel. As a rodent moves through the exit end 1233 of the funnel, the bias of the fingers 1234 causes the tips of the fingers to remain in contact with the body of the rodent. If the rodent tries to reverse course, the tips of the fingers 1234 dig into or otherwise apply pressure to the rodent, thereby encouraging the rodent to continue moving forward to the enclosure portion of the trap. Once the rodent exits the funnel 1232, the fingers 1234 return to their initial position, thus rendering the exit end 1233 of the funnel too narrow for the rodent's head to fit through so the rodent cannot move back through the funnel. In addition, the funnel trap mechanism 1230 utilizes the depending protrusions 1217 to prevent the rodent from exiting the live trap 1200 by passing over the funnel trap mechanism 1230.

[00244] Figures 63, 64, and 65 illustrate an alternative trap mechanism, referred to herein as a swing door mechanism 1220. The swing door mechanism 1220 comprises a swing door 1222 that is pivotably attached by a pivot pin 1224 to a base extension 1221 of the live trap 1200 within the tunnel portion 1208 of the trap, suitably near the entry opening 1202 to the trap. The base extension 1221 is coupled to a bottom surface 1223 of the live trap 1200.

[00245] The swing door 1222 is suitably sized in length longer than the interior height of the tunnel portion 1208 of the trap 1200 so that in its initial position it contacts the floor of the trap in a slightly angled orientation of the door. In this

manner, the door 1222 is capable of swinging only one way, i.e., inward toward the enclosure portion of the trap 1200. In the illustrated embodiment, the swing door 1222 also has teeth 1226 positioned along its free edge and its planar surface facing inwards toward the enclosure portion. In the illustrated embodiment, the swing door 1222 has slots or openings 1223 (Fig. 64) disposed therein, thus enabling light to pass through the swing door.

[00246] As the rodent enters the live trap 1200 with the swing door mechanism 1220 they come into contact with the swing door 1222 and cause it to rotate upward about the pivot pin 1224. If the rodent attempts to retreat from the trap 1200 while passing beneath the swing door 1222, the teeth 1226 at the free end and the inward planar surface facing of the swing door bite into the rodent to discourage such rearward movement. After the rodent has cleared the swing door 1222, the door pivots back to its initial state, thus blocking any retreat by the rodent. While teeth 1226 are depicted in Fig. 65 as being positioned along the free edge of the swing door 1222 and planar surface facing inwards towards the enclosure portion, they may be positioned along any portion of the swing door. In addition, the swing door mechanism 1220 utilizes the depending protrusions 1217 to prevent the rodent from exiting the live trap 1200 by passing over the swing door mechanism 1220.

[00247] In other embodiments an additional swing door (not shown) may be positioned in front of the swing door 1222 (i.e., prior to the swing door 1222 in the direction of movement of the rodent within the live trap 1200. In such an embodiment, the additional swing door does not have teeth and is sized to permit the swinging of the door in both directions within the swing door trap 1220. The rodent is thus able to exit through this additional door before coming into contact with the swing door 1222. The rodent is encouraged by this additional door that it is capable of retreat from the trap and to thus continue through the next door, which is the swing door 1222. The additional swing door and swing door 1222 generally function in the same manner. Like the swing door 1222, the additional swing door may have slots positioned in any portion therein. The base extensions 1221 extend upward from the bottom surface 1223 and have recesses 1225 formed therein. The base extensions 1221 may be formed integrally with the bottom surface 1223 or they may be formed separately and suitably coupled thereto. The recesses 1225 are suitably sized to

receive portions of trap mechanisms placed therein. For example, the recesses 1225 are sized and positioned to receive the pivot pin 1224 of the swing door mechanism 1220 as shown in Fig. 65. The recesses 1225 are also sized and positioned to receive the pivot pin 1219 of the ramp mechanism 1214 as shown in Fig. 59 and a portion of either the funnel 1232 or the rigid segment 1236 thereof of the funnel trap mechanism 1230 as shown in Fig. 62.

[00248] Figs. 69, 70, and 71 illustrate perspective, top, and side views of the bottom surface 1223 of the live trap 1200. The bottom surface 1223 of the live trap 1200 is positioned adjacent to the bottom panel 1118 of the station 1100 when in operation. The bottom surface 1223 is selectively separable from the remainder of the live trap to permit servicing of the live trap (e.g., removal of rodents and debris therefrom and changing of trap mechanisms). Moreover, according to some embodiments, a living hinge 1227 permits translation of only a portion 1229 (broadly, an “access panel”) of the bottom surface 1223 generally disposed adjacent the tunnel portion 1208 away from the remainder of the live trap 1200 to expose an access opening 1235 to permit the servicing and/or replacement of the trap mechanism. The access panel 1229 is thus positionable between a closed position in which the access opening 1235 is closed and an opened position. In the open position, the trap mechanisms, such as glue boards, are insertable, removable, and serviceable through the access opening 1235. An additional trap portion opening (not shown) may be provided separate from the access opening and disposed in a portion of the live trap 1200 near the trap mechanism. A closure panel (not shown) is suitably provided to cover the trap portion opening and is positionable between a closed position in which the trap portion opening is closed and an opened position wherein the interior of the trap portion of the live trap 1200 is accessible for servicing.

[00249] Figures 79 through 107 illustrate a third embodiment of a rodent management station (indicated generally at 300), which is similar in geometric shape and general configuration to the rodent management station 100 described above in relation to Figures 1 through 37 and the rodent management station 1100 described in relation to Figures 38 through 78. In this second embodiment, the rodent management station 300 is substantially smaller than (e.g., scaled down from) the rodent management stations 100 and 1100 of the first and second embodiments. For

example, the rodent management station 300 illustrated in Figs. 79-85 is an approximately three-eighths scale of the previously described rodent management stations 100 and 1100.

[00250] Like the rodent management stations 100 and 1100, the rodent management station 300 is a multi-sided structure with at least one and more suitably two opposite entry openings 302 formed therein. The rodent management station 300 is of a modular design, permitting a plurality of different bait configurations as will be described in further detail herein. The rodent management station 300 possesses many of the same features as the rodent management station 100, such as, without limitation, the overall geometric shape of the station 300 defining a quarter-dome shape and the locking mechanisms securing the base 304 to the lid 306 when the station 300 is in a closed configuration.

[00251] The rodent management station 300 generally comprises a base 304 and a lid 306 that is releasably connectable to the base for configuration between an opened configuration and a closed configuration. In the closed configuration, the lid 306 and base 304 together broadly define a housing having a substantially enclosed interior space with the exception of the openings 302. These entry openings 302 are suitably disposed in opposite sides of the station 300, and more particularly opposite sides of the lid 306 in the illustrated embodiment. In the opened configuration of the station 300 (Figs. 91, 92), the lid 306 is generally separated at least in part from the base 304 to provide access to the interior space of the rodent management station 300 for maintenance of the station, such as, without limitation, replenishing the bait supply, inspecting the rodent management station 300, and clearing debris from the rodent management station 300.

[00252] The base 304 and lid 306 may be suitably fabricated from any number of materials, most suitably plastic or other suitable weather resistant material. For example, the base 304 and lid 306 may be formed in an injection molding process used for producing parts from thermoplastic or thermosetting plastic materials. It is understood, however, that the lid and base may be constructed of metal or other suitable materials, and that the lid and base may be constructed of different materials from each other, without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00253] In one particularly suitable embodiment, rodent management station 300 has at least one inspection member to permit inspection of the interior space of the station housing. For example, in the illustrated embodiment at least a portion of the station 300 housing is translucent or more suitably transparent. More particularly, at least a portion of at least one of the rear wall 330 and the bottom panel 322 is translucent or transparent. Even more particularly, the rear wall 330 and bottom panel 322 of the illustrated embodiment are constructed to be substantially entirely translucent and more suitably transparent such that the entire base 304 further defines an inspection member of the rodent management station 300. In such an embodiment, the lid 306 is suitably opaque such that when the station 300 is resting at a predetermined location such as a corner, with the rear wall against a structural wall (e.g., of a building, etc.) and the bottom panel down against a support surface, one cannot see into the interior space of the station housing upon walking by. Rather, the station 300 must be intentionally moved away from its in-use location to allow inspection.

[00254] It is understood that only one of the rear wall 330 and bottom panel 322 may be translucent or transparent. It is also understood that less than the entire rear wall 330 and/or bottom panel 322 may be translucent or transparent without departing from the scope of this invention. For example, one or more translucent or transparent windows may be disposed in an otherwise opaque rear wall 330 and/or bottom panel 322. Alternatively, one or more viewing openings or slots may be provided in the rear wall 330 and/or bottom panel 322 for seeing into the interior space of the station 300 housing. While an inspection member is described herein in connection with this third, smaller embodiment of a rodent management station 300 it is understood that one or more inspection members may be provided on either of the rodent management stations 100, 1100 of the previous embodiments, and more particularly on the respective rear wall 116, 1116 and/or bottom panel 114, 1114 thereof.

[00255] Although not shown, a removable cover, or covers, may be provided to cover the one or more inspection members to further inhibit unintended viewing therethrough of the interior space of the station 300 housing. The removable cover may be a removable film, sticker, panel or other suitable structure.

[00256] In the illustrated embodiment, the lid 306 is suitably entirely separable from the base 304 (e.g., not hinged thereto as in the rodent management station 100 of the first embodiment). It is understood, however, that the lid 306 may be hinged (e.g., as by a living hinge or suitable mechanical hinge) as in the first embodiment described previously. In the closed configuration of the station 300, the lid 306 and base 304 are releasably held in assembly by a suitable locking mechanism 342 (similar to or the same as locking mechanism 142 described above) to inhibit unauthorized or unintended opening of the rodent management station 300. Additionally, more than one locking mechanism may be used to releasably hold together the lid 306 and the base 304, according to other embodiments.

[00257] The rear wall 330 (broadly, the upstanding wall) of the base 304 is again of two wall construction having an inner panel and an outer panel spaced from each other and connected by a suitable top panel and end panels. The lid 306 is relatively flat along the edge margin wherein the lid overlays the top panel of the rear wall 330 so that the lid lays flat against the top panel of the rear wall. Such an arrangement provides increased resistance to crushing of the lid 306 by a downward directed force, such as by someone inadvertently stepping on the rodent management station 300 or dropping a heavy object thereon. As in the previous embodiments, the outer panel of the rear wall 330 extends above the top panel and outward of the end panels so that when the lid is closed the edge of the lid abuts or is in closely spaced relationship with the outer panel to inhibit the ability of the lid to be pried open. Additionally, while in the previous embodiments the bottom edge of the lid 106 extends down into abutting or closely spaced relationship with the inner surface 118 of the bottom panel 114 about the periphery of the bottom panel, in this embodiment the lid extends down around the outside of the bottom panel (except at the rear wall 116), such as about a peripheral skirt 318 of the bottom panel 322 and more suitably terminates generally flush with the bottom of the station 300 to further inhibit the lid from being pried open. It is understood that such an arrangement may also be provided on the rodent management stations 100, 1100 of the previous embodiments, or that the lid arrangement of the previous embodiments may be used for the station 300 of this embodiment without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00258] A rain gutter (e.g., a groove) 335, as best seen in Figs. 91 and 98, is formed in the rear wall 330 and extends from each lateral side of the locking mechanism 342 along the top panel and down along the end panels to where the rear wall meets the bottom panel 322. This gutter 335 arrangement facilitates the run-off of water that gets into the station 300 via the locking mechanism 342 or between the lid 306 and the rear wall 330. As illustrated in Fig. 92, the lid 306 of the station 300 of this embodiment further comprises flange members 337 extending inward from each edge of the lid generally along the sides of the lid and across a portion of the top of the lid. These flange members 337 are sized for slidable receipt within the groove 335 (e.g., in the manner of a tongue-in-groove arrangement) as the lid is lowered onto the base 304 to facilitate alignment on and placement of the lid 306 down onto the rear wall 330 and over the rest of the base 304.

[00259] The lid 306 of the station 300 (in a manner similar to the lid 106 of the station 100) includes laterally opposite walls 310 broadly defining the opposite sides of the station 300, a front wall broadly defining the front of the station 300 and a top wall broadly defining the top of the station 300. As illustrated in Figs. 82 and 84, the lid 306 further comprises interior panels 312 (broadly, partition structure) depending therefrom to partition the interior space of the station 300 housing into a desired layout for rodent management. The interior panels 312 may be molded together with other lid components or formed separate therefrom and joined thereto by adhesive, welding, fastening, or other suitable attachment technique.

[00260] As seen in Figs. 81 and 94, an outer surface 314 of the bottom panel 322 of the base 304 has a plurality of protrusions 316 depending therefrom. These protrusions 316 function in a manner similar to the plurality of ribs 126 shown in the embodiment of Figure 7 and discussed above. The protrusions 316 each have a length that results in the terminal ends of the protrusions 316 lying generally in the same horizontal plane as the lower edge of the skirt 318 (e.g., the bottom of the station 300). Adhesive may be placed on a mounting surface (to which the station is to be mounted) or directly onto the protrusions 316. Upon mounting of the station 300 down onto the mounting surface, adhesive more readily spreads up into the protrusions 316 to the enhance the bonding between the base and the mounting surface. That is, the protrusions 316 provide an increased surface area for contact

with the adhesive, resulting in a strengthened bond between the adhesive, the rodent management station 300, and the mounting surface. In the illustrated embodiment, the protrusions 316, are grouped together at a central location on the bottom surface 314 of the base 304. However, in other embodiments a variety of configurations of the protrusions 316 may be utilized. Alternatively, a rib and groove pattern such as that present in the first embodiment may be provided on the station 300 of this second embodiment without departing from the scope of this invention.

[00261] With reference to Figs. 92-94 and 98, the interior panels 312 depending from the lid 306 are configured to extend into abutting or closely spaced relationship with an inner surface 320 of the bottom panel 322 of the base 304 when the lid is closed to partition the interior space of the station 300 housing into a generally central bait chamber 338 and a pair of pathways 303 each extending from opposite one of the entry openings 302 along the lid to an entryway to the bait station with the entryway also defined by the interior panels. The pathways 303 together define a single passageway 309 that extends from one entry opening 302 to the opposite entry opening, around the bait chamber 338. The passageway 309 prevents rodents entering the rodent management station 300 at the openings 302 from traveling straight through the rodent management station and instead direct rodents along the passageway 309 towards the front of the rodent management station and the entryway to the bait chamber 338. Accordingly, it will be seen that the interior panels 312 restrict access to the bait chamber 338 (and hence bait disposed therein), i.e., by omitting access to the bait chamber from openings 302 in the rodent management station 300. Thus, non-targeted animals (e.g., dogs or cats) and unauthorized individuals (e.g., children) cannot reach the bait in the bait chamber when the lid 306 is closed.

[00262] The interior panels 312 in one suitable embodiment have one or more through-openings 341 formed therein, and more suitably disposed in directional alignment with each of the entry openings 302. For example, in the illustrated embodiment the one or more through-openings 341 comprise a plurality of elongate, vertically extending slots formed in the interior panels 312 to define a plurality of slats, or baffles 340 in directional alignment with the entry openings 302. The slots are suitably sized large enough to permit light to enter the rodent management station

300 while still sized substantially smaller than the entry openings so as to inhibit rodents from passing through the slots. In the illustrated embodiment in which the rodent management station 300 has two laterally opposite entry openings 302, the slots also allow light to pass through the entire rodent management station 300 so that a rodent can see straight through the station through the entry openings.

[00263] These slots also provide open communication between the pathways and the central bait chamber 338 so that the rodent is able to better smell (due to air flow through the rodent management station) bait in the bait chamber from the exterior of the station 300 and upon entry into the station as the rodent is routed along the pathway. It is understood that additional through-openings 341 may be provided along a longer segment of the pathway from the entry opening 302 to the entryway of the bait chamber 338, including along the entire pathway. It is also understood that the through-openings may be other than in the form of slots, such as perforations, holes or other suitable openings that may or may not extend to the bottom edge of the interior panels 312. The interior panels 312 may also include a plurality of gussets or webs (not shown) where the interior panels 312 adjoin the lid 306 to provide additional strength and rigidity to the lid and interior panels.

[00264] The locking mechanism 342 used to releasably secure the base 304 to the lid 306 operates in the same or similar manner as the locking mechanisms 142 and 1142 described above in relation to the rodent management stations 100 and 1100, respectively. The locking mechanism 342 thus functions to prevent unauthorized or unintended opening of the rodent management station 300. Accordingly, the locking mechanism 342 is unlocked by a key similar to and more suitably identical to the key 152 described above. In one embodiment, a rodent management system may comprise two rodent management stations of different size, such as the rodent management station 100 and the rodent management station 300, with a single key 152 configured for use with both of the stations.

[00265] In addition to the differences in overall dimensions between the stations 100 and 300, the rodent management station 300 differs in one aspect from the previously described embodiments in that the bait is positioned differently within the station 300. For example, in this third embodiment bait is instead supported by bait support structure depending from the lid 306 above the bait chamber 338.

[00266] One or more bait supports 358 may be utilized for positioning and retaining bait within the bait chamber 338. Figs 85 – 89 illustrate two different types of exemplary bait supports 358. The bait supports 358 function in the same general manner and are coupled at one or both of their ends to the lid 306. The bait supports in turn pass through a hole in each of the bait blocks (or a hole in a single bait block) – the hole being centrally located in the bait block although the hole need not be centrally located to remain within the scope of the invention. It is also understood that the bait may be other than in the shape of a block or cube without departing from the scope of this invention. The bait supports 358 are sized to extend longitudinally outward beyond the opposite ends of a row of bait blocks 356.

[00267] Upon separation of the lid 306 from the base 304 for servicing of the rodent management station 300, the bait blocks 356 are retained on the bait support 358 which is in turn coupled to the lid 306. Accordingly, the base 304 is free from protrusions or other obstructions and is easily swept clean of debris.

[00268] In the illustrated embodiment of Figs. 85 and 86, the bait support 358 is in the form of a first bait pin 360. The first bait pin 360 has a generally round shaft 362 extending along its longitudinal axis. At one end of the shaft 362, the diameter thereof is reduced, resulting in a tapered end 364. The reduced diameter of the tapered end 364 provides for easier mounting of bait blocks 356 on the bait pin 360. At the opposite end of the shaft 362, the diameter of the body is increased, resulting in an expanded or enlarged end 366. The enlarged end 366 is receivable within a recess 370 formed into (or suitably attached thereto) an interior surface 368 (as best seen in Figs. 94 and 96) of the lid 306. The outer diameter of the enlarged end 366 and the recess 370 are preferably sized relative to each other to provide a snap or friction fit therebetween. Alternatively, or in addition thereto, a suitable securement mechanism may be used to couple the first bait pin 360 to either the lid 306 or recess 370.

[00269] In another embodiment, a second bait support 358 (i.e., a second bait pin 380) is provided as illustrated in Figs. 87 – 89. The second bait pin 380 has a generally round shaft 382 extending along its longitudinal axis. At one end of the shaft 382, the diameter of the shaft is reduced, resulting in a tapered end 384. The reduced diameter of the tapered end 384 provides for easier mounting of bait blocks

356 on the second bait pin 380. An oblong-shaped member 386 is disposed at the opposite end of the shaft 382. The oblong-shaped member 386 has a central opening 388 located therein. A post (not shown) or other suitable structure is formed into (or suitably attached thereto) the interior surface 368 of the lid 306. The central opening 388 and post are preferably sized relative to each other to enable a snap or friction fit therebetween. The oblong-shaped member 386 also includes an extension 392 sized to fit within a corresponding channel 394 (as best seen in Fig. 98) formed into (or suitably attached thereto) the interior surface 368 of the lid 306. The extension 392 and the channel 394 are preferably sized relative to each other to enable a snap or friction fit therebetween. Alternatively, or in addition thereto, a suitable securement mechanism may be used to couple the second bait pin 380 to the either the lid 306 or post.

[00270] Figs. 99 – 107 illustrate a fourth embodiment of the rodent management station. This embodiment differs from the previously described rodent management stations in that a different type of bait support 358 is utilized. In particular, a bait support in the form of a bait support wire 396 is utilized to support the bait blocks 356. The bait support wire 396 has a generally round (in cross-section) shaft extending along its longitudinal axis. One end of the shaft is receivable in the recess 370 formed into (or suitably attached thereto) a seat formed in the interior surface 368 of the lid 306. Alternatively, or in addition thereto, a suitable securement mechanism may be used to couple the bait support wire 396 to either the lid 306 or recess 370.

[00271] The bait support wire 396 has one or more bends formed therein, and descends into the bait chamber 338 from the end which is received in the recess. Figs. 104 – 107 illustrate various views of the bait support wire 396. The configuration of the bait support wire 396 is provided for illustrative purposes, and a variety of different configurations may be utilized without departing from the scope of the embodiments of the invention.

[00272] When introducing elements of the present invention or the embodiment(s) thereof, the articles “a,” “an,” “the,” and “said” are intended to mean that there are one or more of the elements. The terms “comprising,” “including,” and

“having” are intended to be inclusive and mean that there may be additional elements other than the listed elements.

[00273] As various changes could be made in the above products and methods without departing from the scope of the invention, it is intended that all matter contained in the above description and shown in the accompanying drawings shall be interpreted as illustrative and not in a limiting sense.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A rodent management station comprising:
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the base further comprising at least one upstanding wall extending upward relative to the floor panel about substantially less than the circumference of the floor panel such that a continuous circumferential segment of at least about 25 percent of the floor panel circumference is free from enclosure by the at least one upstanding wall in the opened configuration of the station.
2. The rodent management station of claim 1 wherein the rodent management station has a front, a rear, and transversely opposite sides, the at least one upstanding wall extending upward relative to the floor panel other than along the front of the housing in the opened configuration of the station.
3. The rodent management station of claim 2 wherein the at least one upstanding wall extends upward relative to the floor panel only along the rear of the housing in the opened configuration of the station.
4. The rodent management station of claim 1 wherein the rodent management station has a front, a rear, and transversely opposite sides, the at least one upstanding wall extending upward relative to the floor panel other than along one of the transversely opposite sides of the housing in the opened configuration of the station.

5. The rodent management station of claim 4 wherein the at least one upstanding wall extends upward relative to the floor panel other than along both of the sides of the housing in the opened configuration of the station.

6. The rodent management station of claim 1 wherein in the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed from the interior space of the housing the inner surface of the floor panel is free from upstanding structure of a height greater than 1 cm other than the at least one upstanding wall.

7. The rodent management station of claim 1 wherein in the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed from the interior space of the housing the inner surface of the floor panel is free from upstanding structure of a length greater than 1 cm other than the at least one upstanding wall.

8. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a front edge, a rear edge, and transversely opposite side edges, in the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed therefrom the inner surface of the floor panel being free from surface discontinuities of greater than 1 cm transversely across the entire floor panel from one floor panel side edge to the opposite floor side edge.

9. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior

space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the lid and base being configured such that in the opened configuration of the station and with all traps removed from off of the floor panel the inner surface of the floor panel is accessible to permit the removal of debris therefrom without moving the base and without picking or suctioning debris up off of the inner surface of the floor panel.

10. The rodent management station of claim 9 wherein in the opened configuration of the station the base is configured to permit sliding movement of debris off of the inner surface of the floor panel.

11. The rodent management station of claim 10 wherein the station is cleanable with one of a brush and broom, the base having a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the base being configured to permit movement of said one of a brush and a broom from a position transversely off of and away from one edge of the floor panel across the inner surface of the floor panel to a position transversely off of and away from the opposite edge of the floor panel without lifting said one of a brush and a broom.

12. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said housing further having internal partition structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the

housing, and a pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber, the partition structure having at least one through-opening therein other than at the bait chamber entryway to provide open communication between the pathway and the bait chamber other than at said bait chamber entryway, said at least one through-opening being sized substantially smaller than the housing entry opening and the bait chamber entryway to inhibit rodents against entering the bait chamber at the at least one through-opening.

13. The rodent management station of claim 12 wherein the at least one through-opening is disposed in generally directional alignment with the entry opening of the housing.

14. The rodent management station of claim 12 wherein the at least one through-opening comprises at least one elongate slot disposed in the partition structure.

15. The rodent management station of claim 14 wherein the at least one elongate slot comprises a plurality of elongate vertically extending slots disposed in the partition structure.

16. The rodent management station of claim 12 wherein the base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface, the partition structure being connected to the lid of the housing for conjoint movement with the lid relative to the base upon movement of the lid to the opened configuration of the station, in the closed configuration of the station at least a portion of the partition structure being in closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel to inhibit rodents from moving beneath said portion of the partition structure.

17. The rodent management station of claim 13 wherein the housing has a pair of entry openings through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the internal partition structure being configured to partition the interior space of the

housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from each of the entry openings of the housing, a first pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber and a second pathway separate from the first pathway and extending away from the other one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber, the partition structure having at least one through-opening in generally opposed relationship with one housing entry opening, and at least one other through-opening in generally opposed relationship with the other housing entry opening.

18. The rodent management station of claim 17 wherein the entry openings of the housing are in spaced relationship with each other along a straight line from one entry opening to the other entry opening.

19. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said housing further having internal partition structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber, the partition structure being connected to the lid of the housing for conjoint movement with the lid relative to the base upon movement of the lid to the opened configuration of the station, in the closed configuration of the station at least a portion of the partition structure being in closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel to inhibit rodents from crawling under said portion of the partition structure.

20. The rodent management station of claim 19 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and opposite sides, the partition structure being spaced transversely from at least one of the front, the back and the opposite sides of the housing to define said pathway between the partition structure and the housing.

21. The rodent management station of claim 20 wherein said at least one of the front, the back and the opposite sides of the housing is defined by the lid of said housing such that the pathway is disposed transversely between the partition structure and the lid.

22. The rodent management station of claim 19 wherein the housing has a pair of entry openings through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the internal partition structure being configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from each of the entry openings of the housing, a first pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber and a second pathway separate from the first pathway and extending away from the other one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber.

23. The rodent management station of claim 22 wherein the entry openings are in directional alignment with each other along a straight line from one of said entry openings to the other.

24. The rodent management station of claim 19 wherein the partition structure is formed integrally with the lid.

25. The rodent management station of claim 19 wherein the partition structure is generally curved along the length of the pathway.

26. A rodent management station positionable on a support surface, the station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the housing having a bottom defined at least in part by the base and adapted for resting on the support surface, said base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, and at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the inner surface of the floor panel being everywhere disposed above the bottom of the housing by at least 2.54 mm (0.1 inches).

27. The rodent management system of claim 26 wherein the inner surface of the floor panel is everywhere disposed above the bottom of the housing by at least 5.08 mm (0.2 inches).

28. The rodent management system of claim 26 wherein the floor panel comprises a peripheral skirt extending from the inner surface of the floor panel to the bottom of the housing.

29. The rodent management system of claim 28 wherein the lid has a terminal edge configured for closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel in the closed configuration of the station.

30. The rodent management system of claim 28 wherein the lid is configured to extend down over the skirt of the floor panel in the closed configuration of the lid.

31. The rodent management system of claim 30 wherein the lid has a terminal edge and is configured to extend down over the skirt of the floor panel with the terminal edge of the lid in generally flush alignment with the bottom of the housing.

32. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, at least a portion of the inner surface of the floor panel being textured to provide a tactile response to rodents moving within the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

33. The rodent management station of claim 32 wherein the housing further comprises internal partition structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway defined at least in part by the partition structure and extending away from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber, at least a portion of the inner surface of the floor panel along said pathway being textured.

34. The rodent management station of claim 33 wherein the partition structure is connected to the lid of the housing for conjoint movement with the lid relative to the base upon movement of the lid to the opened configuration of the station, substantially the entire inner surface of the floor panel being textured.

35. The rodent management station of claim 32 wherein the housing has a pair of entry openings through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said openings being in directional alignment with each other along a straight line extending from one opening to the other, the textured portion of the inner surface of the floor panel comprising at least one of a plurality of grooves and a plurality of elongate bumps extending generally parallel to the directional alignment of the entry openings.

36. The rodent management station of claim 33 wherein the housing has a pair of entry openings through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the internal partition structure being configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from each of the entry openings of the housing, a first pathway extending away from one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber and a second pathway separate from the first pathway and extending away from the other one of the entry openings to the entryway of the bait chamber, the inner surface of the floor panel along each of said first and second pathways being textured.

37. The rodent management station of claim 36 wherein each of said pathways defines a corresponding path of movement along which rodents move from one of the entry openings of the housing to the bait chamber entryway, the textured portion of the inner surface along each of said pathways comprising at least one of a plurality of grooves and a plurality of elongate bumps extending at least in part crosswise to the path of movement of said pathway.

38. The rodent management station of claim 33 wherein the floor panel further comprises a demarcation on the inner surface thereof indicative of the location of the partition structure in the closed configuration of the station.

39. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the housing having an

inspection member allowing inspection of the interior space of the housing without opening the station.

40. The rodent management station of claim 39 wherein the inspection member comprises a portion of the housing being one of transparent and translucent.

41. The rodent management station of claim 40 wherein the inspection member comprises at least a portion of the base being one of transparent and translucent.

42. The rodent management station of claim 41 wherein the inspection member comprises at least a portion of the floor panel being one of transparent and translucent.

43. The rodent management station of claim 39 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the base further comprising an upstanding rear wall extending at least in part upward relative to the inner surface of the floor panel, the inspection member being disposed on the upstanding rear wall of the base.

44. The rodent management station of claim 43 wherein the inspection member comprises at least a portion of the upstanding rear wall of the base being one of transparent and translucent.

45. The rodent management station of claim 43 wherein the inspection member comprises a first inspection member, the station further comprising a second inspection member disposed on the floor panel of the base.

46. The rodent management station of claim 39 wherein at least one of the rodent management station and the inspection member are configured to prevent viewing of the interior space of the housing without moving the housing.

47. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the base further comprising an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference thereof, the upstanding wall having an upper edge and at least one gutter disposed in and extending along at least a portion of the upper edge of the upstanding wall to facilitate water drainage from the upstanding wall, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

48. The rodent management station of claim 47 wherein the upstanding wall extends up from the floor panel about less than the entire circumference of said floor panel such that the upstanding wall has the upper edge and a pair of end edges, the at least one gutter further extending downward along at least a portion of each of the end edges of the upstanding wall.

49. The rodent management station of claim 47 wherein the lid is configured such that in the closed configuration of the station the lid covers at least a portion of the upper edge of the upstanding wall.

50. The rodent management station of claim 49 wherein the lid is configured such that in the closed configuration of the station the lid further covers at least a portion of each of the end edges of the upstanding wall.

51. The rodent management station of claim 47 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the upstanding wall extending only along the rear of the housing.

52. The rodent management station of claim 47 further comprising at least one drain hole disposed within the upper edge of the upstanding wall.

53. The rodent management station of claim 52 where at least one drain hole is disposed within the at least one gutter of the upper edge of the upstanding wall.

54. A rodent management station comprising:
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the base further comprising an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference, the upstanding wall having an upper edge and at least one drain hole disposed in the upper edge out of communication with the interior space of the housing to permit water to drain from the upper edge of the upstanding wall away from the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

55. The rodent management station of claim 54 wherein the upstanding wall has a plurality of drain holes disposed in the upper edge thereof in spaced relationship with each other along said upper edge.

56. The rodent management station of claim 54 wherein the upstanding wall extends about less than the entire circumference of said floor panel.

57. The rodent management station of claim 54 wherein the lid is configured such that in the closed configuration of the station the lid covers at least a portion of the upper edge of the upstanding wall.

58. The rodent management station of claim 54 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the upstanding wall extending only along the rear of the base.

59. The rodent management station of claim 54 wherein the upstanding side wall comprises an inner panel in part defining the interior space of the housing and an outer panel in opposed, spaced relationship with the inner panel, and a top panel spanning the inner and outer panels and defining the upper edge of the upstanding wall, the at least one drain hole being disposed in the top panel out of communication with the interior space of the housing to permit water to drain from the top panel of the upstanding wall to between the inner and outer panels of the upstanding wall.

60. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a circumference and an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, the base further comprising an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel about at least a portion of the circumference thereof, the upstanding wall comprising an inner panel in part defining the interior space of the housing, an outer panel in opposed, spaced relationship with the inner panel, and a top panel spanning the inner and outer panels of said upstanding wall, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, in the closed position of the station the lid covering at least a portion of the top panel of the upstanding wall of the base, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further

comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

61. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the upstanding wall extends about less than the entire circumference of said floor panel.

62. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the upstanding wall extending only along the rear of the base.

63. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the housing has a bottom, the outer panel having a lower edge at least a portion of which is generally at the bottom of the housing.

64. The rodent management station of claim 63 wherein the inner panel of the upstanding wall has a lower edge that is generally coterminal with the lower edge of the outer panel of the upstanding wall.

65. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the top panel has a maximum width in the range of about 0.5 cm to about 5.0 cm.

66. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the upstanding wall further comprises a pair of end panels spanning the inner and outer panels.

67. The rodent management station of claim 66 wherein in the closed configuration of the station the lid further covers at least a portion of each of said end panels of the upstanding wall.

68. The rodent management station of claim 60 wherein the inner panel and the outer panel have corresponding upper edges, the outer panel upper edge being disposed higher than the inner panel upper edge.

69. The rodent management station of claim 68 wherein the outer panel upper edge is disposed higher than the top panel

70. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having a front, a rear, opposite sides, and an interior space, the housing including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the housing having at least two mounting ports separate from the rodent entry opening, said at least two mounting ports being mounted on the same one of the front, the rear, the one side and the opposite side of the housing.

71. The rodent management station of claim 70 wherein the at least two mounting ports comprises a pair of mounting ports in spaced relationship with each other in one of a horizontal alignment and a vertical alignment on the housing.

72. The rodent management station of claim 70 wherein the at least two mounting ports comprises at least three mounting ports on the same one of the front, the rear, the one side and the opposite side of the housing.

73. The rodent management station of claim 70 further comprising a respective movable closure for each mounting port to permit selective opening of each port by moving the corresponding movable closure away from the port.

74. The rodent management station of claim 74 wherein the movable closure comprises a removable closure separable from the housing.

75. The rodent management station of claim 75 wherein the removable closure is a frangible closure.

76. The rodent management station of claim 70 wherein the base comprises a floor panel having an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing, and an upstanding wall extending up from the floor panel, the at least one mounting port being disposed on the upstanding wall of the base.

77. The rodent management station of claim 76 wherein the upstanding wall comprises an inner panel in part defining the interior space of the housing, an outer panel in opposed, spaced relationship with the inner panel, and a connecting panel spanning the inner and outer panels of the upstanding wall, the at least one mounting port being disposed on the outer panel of the upstanding wall such that the at least one mounting port is not open to the interior space of the housing.

78. The rodent management station of claim 76 wherein the housing has a front, a rear, and opposite sides, the upstanding wall extending only along the rear of the housing.

79. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing;

a locking mechanism operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station, the locking mechanism being substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, at least one of the lid and the base having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base; and

a cover connected to at least one of the lid and the base, the cover extending over at least a portion of the at least one opening to inhibit moisture on the housing against entering the housing at said at least one opening.

80. The rodent management station of claim 79 wherein the at least one opening is disposed in the lid, the cover being connected to the lid and extending over at least a portion of the at least one opening.

81. The rodent management station of claim 80 wherein the at least one opening is oriented in a first planar orientation, the cover being oriented in a second planar orientation different from the first planar orientation of said at least one opening.

82. The rodent management station of claim 81 wherein the first planar orientation of the at least one opening is a generally vertical orientation, the cover being disposed on the lid above the at least one opening and extending at least in part horizontally over the at least one opening.

83. The rodent management station of claim 79 further comprising a tool insertable through the at least one opening for unlocking the lid from the base, the housing having an outer surface and a guide channel in said outer surface generally adjacent the at least one opening to facilitate guidance of the tool into the at least one opening.

84. The rodent management station of claim 83 wherein the cover extends over at least a portion of the at least one opening in generally opposed, spaced relationship with the guide channel, the at least one opening being intermediate the guide channel and the cover.

85. The rodent management station of claim 84 wherein the at least one opening is disposed in the lid, the guide channel being formed in the lid and the cover

being connected to lid in generally opposed, spaced relationship with the guide channel.

86. The rodent management station of claim 85 wherein the at least one opening is oriented in a generally vertical orientation, the guide channel being oriented at least in part horizontally and disposed below the at least one opening, the cover being disposed above the at least one opening and extending at least in part horizontally over the at least one opening in generally opposed, spaced relationship with the guide channel.

87. The rodent management station of claim 83 wherein the tool has a maximum width, the guide channel having a width of no greater than the maximum width of the tool.

88. The rodent management station of claim 87 wherein the guide channel has a width less than the maximum width of the tool.

89. The rodent management system of claim 79, wherein the lid is hinged to the base for hinged movement of the lid relative to the base between the open and closed configurations of the station.

90. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing;

a locking mechanism operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station, the locking mechanism being substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, at least one of the lid and the base having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base; and

a tool insertable through the at least one opening for unlocking the lid from the base, the housing further having an outer surface and a guide channel in said outer surface to facilitate guidance of the tool into the at least one opening.

91. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the at least one opening is disposed in the lid, the guide channel also being disposed in an outer surface of the lid.

92. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the at least one opening is oriented in a generally vertical orientation on the housing, the guide channel being oriented at least in part horizontally and disposed below the at least one opening.

93. The rodent management station of claim 92 wherein the guide channel slopes at least in part downward away from the at least one opening to inhibit moisture in the guide channel against flowing toward the at least one opening.

94. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the channel has a terminal end generally adjacent the at least one opening.

95. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the tool has a maximum width, the guide channel having a pair of side walls defining a width of said guide channel that is no greater than the maximum width of the tool.

96. The rodent management station of claim 95 wherein the guide channel has a width that is less than the maximum width of the tool.

97. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the guide channel has a proximal end generally adjacent the at least one opening and a distal end spaced from the proximal end, the guide channel having a first depth at its proximal end and a second depth at its distal end, the second depth being substantially less than the first depth.

98. The rodent management station of claim 90 wherein the guide channel is configured to direct moisture therein away from the at least one opening.

99. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing;

a locking mechanism operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station, the locking mechanism being substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, the lid having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base; and

a tool insertable through the at least one opening for unlocking the lid from the base, the tool having an insert portion configured for insertion through the at least one opening, and an elongate handle connected to the insert portion for grasping the tool, the insert portion of the tool being configured for coupling with the lid upon unlocking the lid from the base to facilitate use of the handle to position the lid away from the base toward the opened configuration of the station.

100. The rodent management system of claim 99 wherein the lid has an outer surface and a guide channel disposed in said outer surface to facilitate guidance of the insert portion of the tool into the at least one opening,

101. The rodent management system of claim 99 wherein the elongate handle of the tool is angled relative to the insert portion thereof.

102. The rodent management system of claim 99, wherein the locking mechanism includes:

at least one locking member coupled to a portion of the base, the at least one locking member being outwardly biased; and

a catch member coupled to a portion of the lid, the catch member having at least one notch formed therein sized to receive the at least one locking member.

103. The rodent management system of claim 102, wherein the tool is configured for insertion into the locking mechanism and separation of the outwardly biased locking member from the catch member.

104. The rodent management system of claim 99, wherein the locking mechanism includes:

at least one locking member coupled to a portion of the lid, the at least one member being outwardly biased; and

a catch member coupled to a portion of the base, the catch member having at least one notch formed therein sized to receive the at least one locking member.

105. The rodent management system of claim 104, wherein the tool is configured for insertion into the locking mechanism and separation of the outwardly biased locking member from the catch member.

106. A rodent management system comprising:

a first rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, a locking mechanism operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station, the locking mechanism being substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, at least one of the lid and the base having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base, and at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing;

a second rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, a locking mechanism operable to releasably interlock the lid and base in the closed configuration of the station, the locking mechanism being substantially inaccessible from exterior of the housing to unlock the lid from the base, at least one of the lid and the base having an opening therein for accessing the locking mechanism to unlock the lid from the base, and at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the second rodent management station being substantially smaller than the first rodent management station; and

a tool insertable through the at least one opening of the first rodent management station housing for unlocking the lid from the base of said first rodent management station, said tool also being insertable through the at least one opening of the second rodent management station housing for unlocking the lid from the base of said second rodent management station.

107. A rodent management station positionable on a support surface comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the housing having a bottom for resting on the support surface, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing, the base comprising a floor panel having a perimeter, an inner surface on which rodents move within the interior space of the housing and an outer surface at least in part defining the bottom of the housing, the floor panel outer surface having a

plurality of cavities disposed therein in spaced relationship with the perimeter of the floor panel.

108. The rodent management station of claim 107 wherein the cavities comprise a plurality of channels disposed in the outer surface of the floor panel, the channels terminating in spaced relationship with the perimeter of the floor panel such that the channels are generally closed from exterior of the housing when the bottom of the housing rests on the support surface.

109. The rodent management station of claim 108 wherein at least one of the channels is at least in part arcuate.

110. The rodent management station of claim 108 wherein the housing has a front and a rear, at least one of the channels extending continuously from adjacent the front of the housing to adjacent the rear of the housing.

111. The rodent management station of claim 107 wherein at least one of the cavities has a cross-sectional shape that is different from a cross-sectional shape of at least another one of the cavities.

112. The rodent management station of claim 107 wherein at least one of the cavities is generally circular in cross-section.

113. The rodent management system of claim 107, wherein the outer surface of the floor panel has at least one region containing a plurality of cavities formed therein, and at least one other region being spaced from said cavity region and being free from cavities.

114. The rodent management system of claim 108, wherein the base comprises a plurality of ribs at the bottom of the housing, the ribs being disposed in generally parallel, spaced relationship with each other to define the channels between respective pairs of the ribs.

115. The rodent management system of claim 107 wherein the plurality of cavities comprises a plurality of channels extending longitudinally on the floor panel outer surface, each of the channels having longitudinally opposite ends with the ends of each channel being closed from exterior of the housing when the bottom of the housing rests on the mounting surface, the channels each having a width, the width of at least one channel being substantially greater than the width of at least one other channel.

116. The rodent management system of claim 108, wherein the channels are defined by spaced-apart ribs disposed on the outer surface of the floor panel.

117. A rodent management station mountable on a mounting surface, the station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the base having an inner surface and an outer surface, said housing having a generally planar bottom defined at least in part by the outer surface of the base for resting on the mounting surface, the base having at least one predetermined bore location at the bottom of the housing at which a bore is to be formed in the base to facilitate mounting the housing on the mounting surface, said base further having guide structure disposed on the outer surface thereof at the bottom of the housing at least one of at and adjacent the at least one predetermined bore location.

118. The rodent management station of claim 117 wherein the guide structure substantially circumscribes the predetermined bore location.

119. The rodent management station of claim 118 wherein the guide structure encircles the predetermined bore location.

120. The rodent management station of claim 117 wherein the guide structure depends from the base of the housing at the bottom thereof.

121. The rodent management station of claim 120 wherein the guide structure is generally cylindrical and encircles the predetermined bore location.

122. The rodent management station of claim 121 where the guide structure is a first guide structure, the station further comprising a second guide structure, the second guide structure being generally cylindrical and encircling the first guide structure in spaced relationship therewith.

123. A rodent management station comprising:
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the housing having a bottom defined at least in part by the base, said base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing, the lid being hinged to the base one of at and adjacent the floor panel thereof on a hinge axis such that the lid is capable of hinged movement on said hinge axis relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said hinge axis being located on the housing higher than the bottom of said housing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

124. The rodent management station of claim 123 wherein the hinge axis is located on the housing higher than the inner surface of the floor panel.

125. The rodent management station of claim 124 wherein the hinge axis is located on the housing with the range of about 2.5 mm to about 25 mm above the inner surface of the floor panel.

126. The rodent management station of claim 123 wherein the housing has a front, a rear and transversely opposite sides, the base further comprising an upstanding rear wall extending generally vertically upward relative to the inner surface of the floor panel and having an upper edge, the lid being hinged to the base such that the hinge axis is substantially lower than the upper edge of the upstanding rear wall.

127. The rodent management station of claim 126 wherein the lid is hinged to the base such that the hinge axis is substantially nearer in height to the inner surface of the floor panel than to the upper edge of the upstanding rear wall.

128. The rodent management station of claim 126 wherein the lid is hinged to the base generally at the front of the housing.

129. The rodent management station of claim 126 wherein the lid is configured to substantially cover the upper edge of the upstanding rear wall in the closed configuration of the station.

130. A rodent management station comprising:
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, in the closed configuration the entry opening having a bottom, a top, a height and a width, the width of the entry opening being substantially greater at the bottom of the opening

than at the top thereof, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

131. The rodent management station of claim 130 wherein the width of the entry decreases as the openings extends upward from the bottom of the entry opening to the top thereof.

132. The rodent management station of claim 130 wherein in the closed configuration of the station the entry opening has the general shape of one of a one-quarter circle and a one-quarter ellipse.

133. The rodent management station of claim 130 wherein the entry opening has a maximum width and a maximum height, in the closed configuration of the station the maximum width of the entry opening being greater than the maximum height thereof.

134. The rodent management station of claim 130 wherein the entry opening is disposed entirely in the lid of the housing.

135. The rodent management station of claim 130 wherein the housing comprises a pair of entry openings in spaced relationship with each other and aligned along a generally straight line, the entry openings having substantially the same shape.

136. The rodent management station of claim 131 wherein the maximum height of the housing is in the range of about 10 cm to about 25 cm and the maximum width of the housing is in the range of about 15 cm to about 35 cm.

137. The rodent management station of claim 131 wherein the maximum height of the housing is in the range of about 2.5 cm to about 10 cm and the maximum width of the housing is in the range of about 5 cm to about 15 cm.

138. A rodent management station comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, said base comprising a floor panel having an inner surface on which the rodent moves within the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, in the closed position of the station the lid having a terminal edge one of resting on and in closely spaced relationship with the inner surface of the floor panel, the base further comprising at least one stabilizing member disposed on the base and extending up above the inner surface of the floor panel to inhibit transverse movement of the lid relative to the base at the terminal edge of the lid, said housing having an entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the rodent management station further comprising at least one of a trap and a bait positionable within the interior space of the housing.

139. The rodent management station of claim 138 wherein the at least one stabilizing member comprises a nub extending up from the inner surface of the floor panel generally adjacent the lid within the interior space of the housing to inhibit transverse movement of the lid inward toward the interior space of the housing.

140. The rodent management station of claim 139 wherein the lid comprises at least one locating member configured for releasably coupling with the at least one nub in the closed configuration of the lid.

141. The rodent management station of claim 140 wherein the at least one locating member comprises at least one post connected to the lid and having a terminal end including a bore therein configured to receive the nub therein in the closed configuration of the station.

142. The rodent management station of claim 141 wherein the at least one post is formed integrally with the lid.

143. The rodent management station of claim 138 wherein the lid comprises at least one locating member configured for releasably coupling with the at least one stabilizing member in the closed configuration of the lid.

144. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said housing further having internal structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway leading from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber; and

a rodent trap disposed at least in part within the bait chamber, at least a portion of the trap extending from the bait chamber outward through the entryway thereof into the pathway.

145. The rodent management system of claim 144 wherein the rodent trap comprises a live trap, the live trap having an inlet through which rodents enter the live trap, the live trap being positioned within the bait chamber and pathway of the housing such that the inlet of the live trap is at least one of disposed in and accessible from the pathway.

146. The rodent management system of claim 144 wherein the housing has a pair of entry openings in spaced relationship with each other, the pathway comprising a first pathway segment extending from one entry opening to the bait chamber entryway and a second pathway segment extending from the other entry opening to the bait chamber.

147. The rodent management system of claim 146 wherein the rodent trap comprises a live trap, the live trap having a trap portion configured for disposition within the bait chamber of the housing, and an inlet portion open to the trap portion and extending outward therefrom, the inlet portion being configured to extend through the bait chamber entryway into the pathway, said inlet portion having a pair of inlets through which rodents enter the live trap, one of said inlets being open to the first pathway segment and the other one of said inlets being open to the second pathway segment.

148. The rodent management system of claim 144 wherein the rodent trap is removable from the housing in the open configuration thereof.

149. The rodent management system of claim 148 wherein the rodent trap comprises a live trap, the system further comprising a snap trap, the live trap and snap trap being interchangeable within the housing in the open configuration thereof.

150. The rodent management system of claim 144 further comprising a rodent bait disposed in the bait chamber separate from the rodent trap.

151. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, said housing further having internal structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber having an entryway spaced from the entry opening of the housing, and a pathway leading from the at least one entry opening to the entryway of the bait chamber;

a rodent trap disposed at least in part within the bait chamber; and

rodent bait disposed within the bait chamber separate from the rodent trap.

152. The rodent management system of claim 151 wherein the rodent bait comprises at least one of a toxic bait, a rodent attractant and a monitoring bait.

153. The rodent management system of claim 151 wherein the trap comprises a live trap having an interior in which a rodent is trapped, the bait being disposed within the bait chamber exterior of the live trap.

154. The rodent management system of claim 151 wherein the base has an inner surface at least in part defining a floor of the bait chamber, the trap being configured for seating on said bait chamber floor, the bait being disposed generally above the trap in spaced relationship with the bait chamber floor.

155. The rodent management system of claim 154 further comprising a bait support disposed within the housing for supporting the bait in the bait chamber, the bait support being configured to support the bait above the trap in spaced relationship with the bait chamber floor.

156. The rodent management system of claim 151 wherein the rodent trap is removable from the housing in the open configuration thereof.

157. The rodent management system of claim 156 wherein the rodent trap comprises a live trap, the system further comprising a snap trap, the live trap and snap trap being interchangeable within the housing in the open configuration thereof.

158. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the base having at least one upstanding

sidewall, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a rodent trap positionable within the interior space of the housing, the rodent trap being configured for releasable connection with the at least one upstanding wall of the base.

159. The rodent management system of claim 158 wherein the upstanding sidewall has a slot disposed therein, the rodent trap having a connecting tab configured for releasable disposition within the slot to releasably connect the rodent trap with the sidewall.

160. The rodent management system of claim 158 wherein the upstanding sidewall has a plurality of slots disposed therein, the rodent trap having a plurality of connecting tabs in spaced relationship with each other and configured for releasable disposition within respective ones of the slots to releasably connect the rodent trap with the sidewall.

161. The rodent management system of claim 159 wherein the connecting tab and slot are configured for sliding movement of the connecting tab within the slot.

162. The rodent management system of claim 161 wherein the slot has an open upper end for receiving the connecting tab into the slot.

163. The rodent management system of claim 159 wherein the rodent trap comprises a live trap, the live trap comprising a housing having an exterior and an interior in which rodents are trapped, the live trap further comprising at least one first connecting member on the exterior of the live trap housing, the rodent management system housing further comprising at least one corresponding second connecting member accessible in the open configuration of the rodent management system housing to releasably connect the live trap connecting member with the rodent management system connecting member.

164. The rodent management system of claim 163 wherein one of the first and second connecting members comprises a connecting tab and the other one of the first and second connecting members comprises a slot formed in the respective one of the live trap housing and rodent management system housing.

165. The rodent management system of claim 158 further comprising guard structure, in the closed configuration of the station the guard structure inhibiting disconnection of the rodent trap from the upstanding wall by rodents within the interior space of the housing.

166. The rodent management system of claim 165 wherein the guard structure is disposed on the lid and is positioned relative to the upstanding wall in the closed configuration of the station to inhibit disconnection of the rodent trap from the upstanding wall by rodents within the interior space of the housing.

167. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the base having an upstanding wall, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing;

a rodent trap positionable within the interior space of the housing; and

a trap placement member positionable within the interior space of the housing in releasable connection with the upstanding wall of the housing, the trap placement member being configured for aligning the rodent trap at a predetermined location within the interior space of the housing.

168. The rodent management system of claim 167 wherein the rodent trap has a perimeter, the trap placement member comprising a frame structure having a central opening shaped generally according to the rodent trap perimeter such that the rodent

trap seats within the central opening of the frame in closely spaced relationship therewith.

169. The rodent management system of claim 168 wherein the frame structure comprises a wire frame structure.

170. The rodent management system of claim 168 wherein the upstanding wall has a slot therein, the frame structure having a connecting member configured for releasable disposition within the slot to releasably connect the frame structure with the wall.

171. The rodent management system of claim 170 wherein the upstanding wall has a plurality of slots disposed therein, the placement member having a plurality of connecting members in spaced relationship with each other and configured for releasable disposition within respective ones of the slots to releasably connect the placement member with the wall.

172. The rodent management system of claim 170 wherein the connecting member and slot are configured for sliding movement of the connecting member within the slot.

173. The rodent management system of claim 167 wherein the rodent trap comprises a snap trap.

174. The rodent management system of claim 168 wherein the frame structure comprises a plastic frame structure.

175. A rodent management system comprising,
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which

the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the base having an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing; and

a bait support positionable within the interior space of the housing and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing, the bait support being further configured for releasable connection with at least one of the base and the lid.

176. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein the base comprises an upstanding wall, the bait support being configured for releasable connection with said upstanding wall.

177. The rodent management system of claim 176 wherein the upstanding wall has a slot therein, the bait support having a connecting member configured for releasable disposition within the slot to releasably connect the bait support with the upstanding wall.

178. The rodent management system of claim 177 wherein the upstanding wall has a plurality of bait support slots therein, the bait support being configured for releasable disposition within any one of the bait support slots.

179. The rodent management system of claim 178 wherein the rodent management system comprises a plurality of bait supports, each being configured to support bait above the floor of the housing, the bait supports being further configured for releasable disposition with respective ones of the bait support slots in the upstanding wall.

180. The rodent management system of claim 177 wherein the bait support and the slot are configured for sliding movement of the bait support within the slot.

181. The rodent management system of claim 177 wherein the slot has an open upper end for receiving the bait support into the slot.

182. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein the bait support comprises a platform oriented generally horizontally within the interior space of the housing upon connection of the bait support with said housing.

183. The rodent management system of claim 182 wherein the bait support further comprises a bait mounting pin connected to the platform and extending generally vertically up from said platform upon connection of the bait support with the housing for retaining the bait on the platform.

184. The rodent management system of claim 183 wherein the bait mounting pin is releasably connectable to the bait support platform.

185. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein the bait support comprises a shaped-wire seat on which bait is supported on the bait support above the floor of the housing.

186. The rodent management system of claim 185 wherein the bait support further comprises a wire pin formed integrally with and extending up from the shaped-wire seat for retaining bait on said shaped-wire seat.

187. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein a height of the bait support above the floor of the housing is selectively adjustable.

188. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein the bait support is releasably connectable to the lid of the housing in spaced relationship with the floor of said housing.

189. The rodent management system of claim 175 wherein the bait support is configured to support a liquid bait above the floor of the housing.

190. The rodent management system of claim 175 further comprising a plurality of bait blocks, the bait support comprising a first bait support configured to

support a plurality of said bait blocks with the bait blocks arranged in a generally stacked, vertical arrangement.

191. The rodent management system of claim 190 further comprising a second bait support positionable within the interior space of the housing separate from the first bait support and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing, the second bait support being further configured for releasable connection with at least one of the base and the lid, said second bait support being configured to support a plurality of said bait blocks in a generally horizontal line.

192. The rodent management system of claim 177 further comprising guard structure, in the closed configuration of the station the guard structure inhibiting removal of the bait support from the slot by rodents within the interior space of the housing.

193. The rodent management system of claim 192 wherein the guard structure is disposed on the lid and is positioned to cover at least a portion of the slot in the closed configuration of the station to inhibit removal of the bait support from the slot by rodents within the interior space of the housing.

194. A rodent management system comprising,
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the base having an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing; and

a bait support disposed within the interior space of the housing out of contact with the floor of the housing and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing.

195. The rodent management system of claim 194 wherein the bait support comprises a platform oriented generally horizontally above the floor of the housing to define a gap therebetween within the interior space of the housing.

196. The rodent management system of claim 195 wherein the bait support further comprises a bait mounting pin connected to the platform and extending generally vertically up from said platform within the interior space of the housing.

197. The rodent management system of claim 196 wherein the bait mounting pin is releasably connectable to the bait support platform.

198. The rodent management system of claim 194 wherein the bait support comprises a shaped-wire seat on which bait is supported on the bait support above the floor of the housing.

199. The rodent management system of claim 198 wherein the bait support further comprises a wire pin formed integrally with and extending up from the shaped-wire seat for retaining bait on said shaped-wire seat.

200. The rodent management system of claim 194 wherein a height of the bait support above the floor of the housing is selectively adjustable.

201. The rodent management system of claim 194 wherein the base comprises an upstanding wall, the bait support being mounted on the upstanding wall and at least in part extending into the interior space of the housing above the floor of the housing.

202. A rodent management system comprising,
a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening

through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the base having an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing;

a bait support positionable within the interior space of the housing and configured for supporting bait above the floor of the housing, the bait; and

a height adjustment member configured for selective adjustment of the height of the bait support above the floor of the housing.

203. A rodent management system comprising,

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an open configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one entry opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the base having an inner surface at least in part defining an interior floor of the housing;

a plurality of bait blocks; and

at least one bait support positionable within the interior space of the housing and configured for supporting said bait blocks in spaced relationship with the floor of the housing with the bait blocks collectively arranged in a generally horizontal line.

204. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing, the live trap having an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap, said live trap being configured for disposition within the interior space of the housing with the live trap entry opening out of directional alignment with the at least one opening of the housing in the closed configuration of the housing.

205. The rodent management system of claim 204 wherein the housing has at least two openings through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing, the housing openings being in generally opposed, spaced relationship with each other, the live trap being configured for disposition within the interior space of the housing with the live trap entry opening out of directional alignment with each of said openings of the housing in the closed configuration of the housing.

206. The rodent management system of claim 204 wherein the housing further comprises internal structure configured to partition the interior space of the housing into a bait chamber, and a pathway leading from the at least one housing opening to the bait chamber, the live trap being configured for disposition at least in part within the bait chamber with the live trap entry opening being in open communication with the pathway in spaced relationship with the at least one housing opening.

207. The rodent management system of claim 206 wherein the housing has a front and a rear opposite the front, the at least one opening in the housing being disposed generally adjacent one of the front and the rear of the housing, the live trap being configured for disposition at least in part within the bait chamber with the live trap entry opening being in open communication with the pathway generally adjacent the opposite one of the front and rear of the housing.

208. The rodent management system of claim 204 wherein the at least one housing opening is disposed in the lid of the housing.

209. The rodent management system of claim 206 wherein the housing has a pair of openings in spaced relationship with each other, the pathway comprising a first pathway section extending from one of said openings to the bait chamber and a second pathway section extending from the other of said entry openings to the bait chamber, the live trap being configured for disposition at least in part within the bait

chamber with the live trap entry opening being in open communication with the pathway in spaced relationship with each of the housing openings.

210. The rodent management system of claim 204 wherein the live trap is removable from the housing in the open configuration thereof.

211. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof, the live trap having an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap, a first trap mechanism positionable in the live trap for trapping rodents within the live trap and a second trap mechanism different from the first trap mechanism and positionable in the live trap in place of the first trap mechanism for trapping rodents within the live trap, the live trap and trap mechanisms being configured for releasable securement of the respective first and second trap mechanisms in the live trap to permit interchangeable use of the first and second trap mechanisms in the live trap.

212. The rodent management system of claim 211 wherein the first trap mechanism comprises one of a funnel trap mechanism, a swinging gate mechanism, and a ramp mechanism, the second trap mechanism comprising a different one of the funnel trap mechanism, the swinging gate mechanism, and the ramp mechanism.

213. The rodent management system of claim 211 wherein the live trap further has an access opening and an access panel positionable between a closed position in which the access opening is closed and an opened position, the first and

second trap mechanisms being insertable into and removable from the live trap through the access opening in the opened position of the access panel.

214. The rodent management system of claim 211 wherein the live trap has a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, and an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap, the entry opening of the live trap being disposed in the inlet portion of the live trap, the access opening and access panel also being disposed at the inlet portion of the live trap.

215. The rodent management system of claim 213 wherein the access panel is hinged to the live trap.

216. The rodent management system of claim 213 wherein the live trap has a top and a bottom, the live trap being positionable within the interior space of the rodent management system housing with the bottom of the live trap seated on the base of the housing, the access panel being disposed on the bottom of the live trap.

217. The rodent management system of claim 214 wherein the live trap further has a trap portion opening separate from the access opening and disposed in the trap portion of the live trap, and a closure panel positionable between a closed position in which the trap portion opening is closed, and an opened position in which the trap portion is opened to access the interior of the trap portion for servicing.

218. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof, the live trap having an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap, the live trap including a trap mechanism releasably positionable in the live trap for trapping rodents within the live trap, the live trap having an access opening and an access panel positionable between a closed position in which the access opening is closed and an opened position, the trap mechanism being serviceable, insertable into and removable from the live trap through the access opening in the opened position of the access panel.

219. The rodent management system of claim 218 wherein the live trap has a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, and an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap, the entry opening of the live trap being disposed in the inlet portion of the live trap, the trap mechanism, access opening and access panel also being disposed at the inlet portion of the live trap.

220. The rodent management system of claim 218 wherein the access panel is hinged to the live trap.

221. The rodent management system of claim 218 wherein the live trap has a top and a bottom, the live trap being positionable within the interior space of the rodent management system housing with the bottom of the live trap seated on the base of the housing, the access panel being disposed on the bottom of the live trap.

222. The rodent management system of claim 219 wherein the live trap further has a trap portion opening separate from the access opening and disposed in the trap portion of the live trap, and a closure panel positionable between a closed position in which the trap portion opening is closed, and an opened position in which the trap portion is opened to access the interior of the trap portion for servicing.

223. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof, the live trap comprising a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, and an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap, the inlet portion having an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap for trapping within the trap portion thereof, the trap portion of the live trap having at least one vent opening sized substantially smaller than the live trap entry opening to permit fluid communication between the interior of the trap portion of the live trap and the interior space of the housing.

224. The rodent management system of claim 223 wherein the live trap has a top and a bottom, the at least one vent opening being disposed in the top of the live trap at the trap portion thereof.

225. The rodent management system of claim 223 wherein live trap has a rear wall spaced from the inlet portion and in part defining the trap portion of the live trap, the at least one opening being disposed in the rear wall of the live trap.

226. The rodent management system of claim 225 wherein the live trap further has a top and a bottom, the top of the live trap also having at least one vent opening disposed therein at the trap portion of the live trap.

227. The rodent management system of claim 224 wherein the top has a plurality of vent openings therein at the trap portion of the live trap, at least one of the

vent openings being generally adjacent the connection of the inlet portion with the trap portion of the live trap.

228. The rodent management system of claim 223 wherein the inlet portion of the live trap is substantially narrower than the trap portion, the live trap further comprising a top, a bottom, a rear wall and laterally opposite side walls together defining the interior of the live trap at both the inlet portion and the trap portion thereof, the sidewalls being generally curved where the inlet portion transitions to the trap portion.

229. The rodent management system of claim 228 wherein the sidewalls are connected to the rear wall, the transition of the sidewalls to the rear wall being substantially rounded.

230. A rodent management system comprising:

a housing having an interior space and including a base and a lid together at least in part defining the interior space of the housing, the lid being positionable relative to the base between a closed configuration of the station in which the interior space is substantially enclosed, and an opened configuration of the station in which the interior space is accessible for servicing, the housing having at least one opening through which rodents enter the interior space of the housing; and

a live trap positionable entirely within the interior space of the housing in the closed configuration thereof, the live trap having a top and a bottom and comprising a trap portion in which rodents are trapped within the live trap, an inlet portion in open communication with and extending outward from the trap portion of the live trap, the inlet portion having an entry opening through which rodents enter the live trap, a trap mechanism disposed at least in part within the inlet portion of the live trap in spaced relationship with the entry opening of the live trap, and a plurality of blocking members depending from the top of the live trap at the inlet portion and arranged in longitudinally spaced relationship along the inlet portion to inhibit rodents trapped within the live trap against manipulating the trap mechanism to escape from the trap.

231. The rodent management system of claim 230 wherein the trap mechanism comprises one of a funnel trap mechanism, a swinging gate mechanism, and a ramp mechanism.

232. The rodent management system of claim 231 wherein the trap mechanism includes a gate capable of pivoting movement relative to the top and bottom of the live trap between a generally up position in which the gate generally closes off the entry opening of the live trap from the remainder of the interior of the trap, and a down position in which a rodent can pass from the entry opening through the inlet portion to the trap portion of the trap, at least one of the blocking members being disposed generally above the gate in the up position thereof.

233. The rodent management system of claim 232 wherein the blocking members are arranged longitudinally along the inlet portion from a location intermediate the entry opening and the gate in the up position thereof to a location past the gate in the up position thereof.

234. The rodent management system of claim 233 wherein the gate is biased toward its up position.

235. The rodent management system of claim 233 wherein the trap mechanism comprises a ramp mechanism including the gate.

236. The rodent management system of claim 233, wherein the interior of the gate at the inlet portion thereof has an interior height, the gate having a length longer than said interior height such that in the up position of the gate the gate is in a generally angled orientation.

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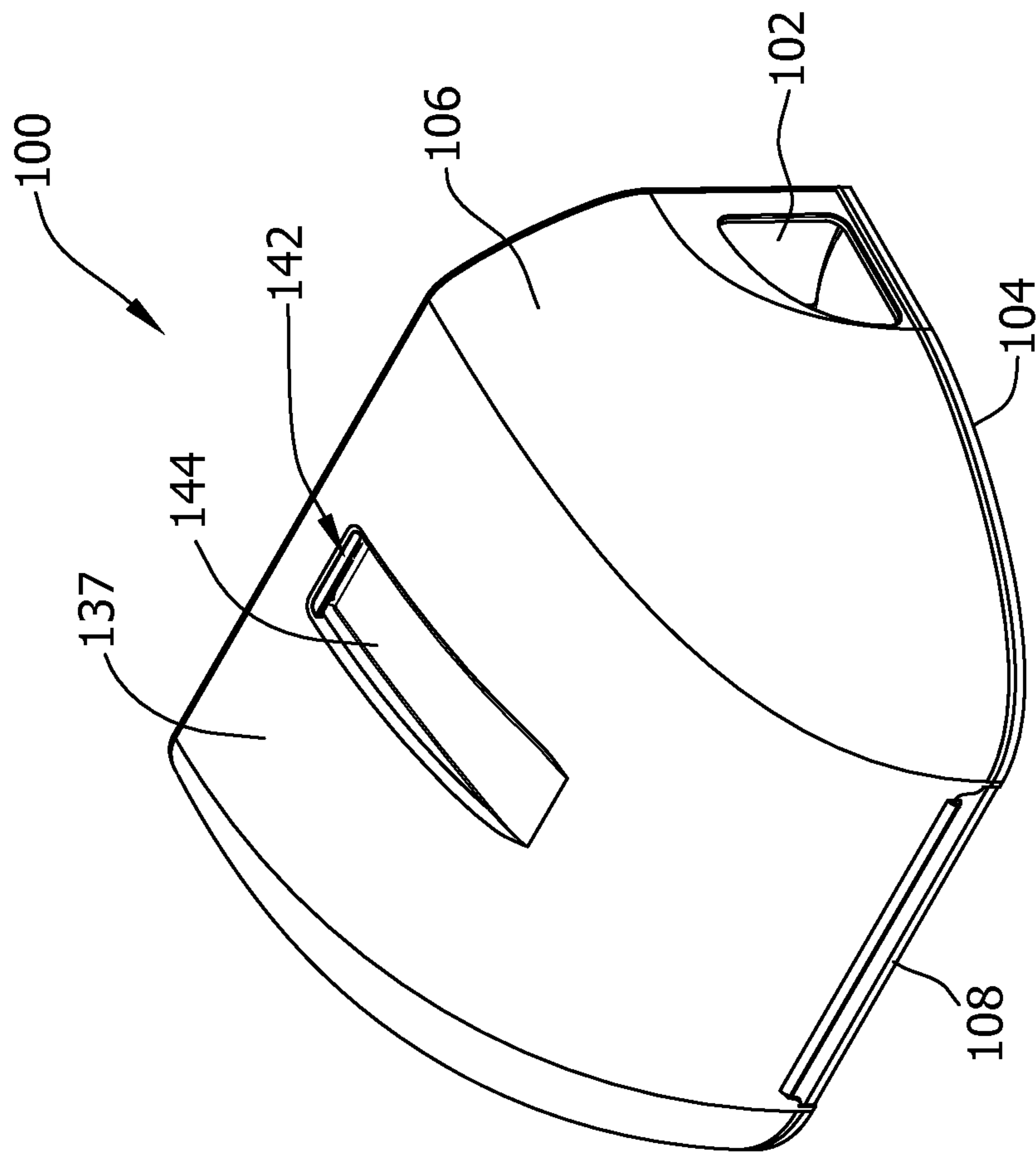


FIG. 1A

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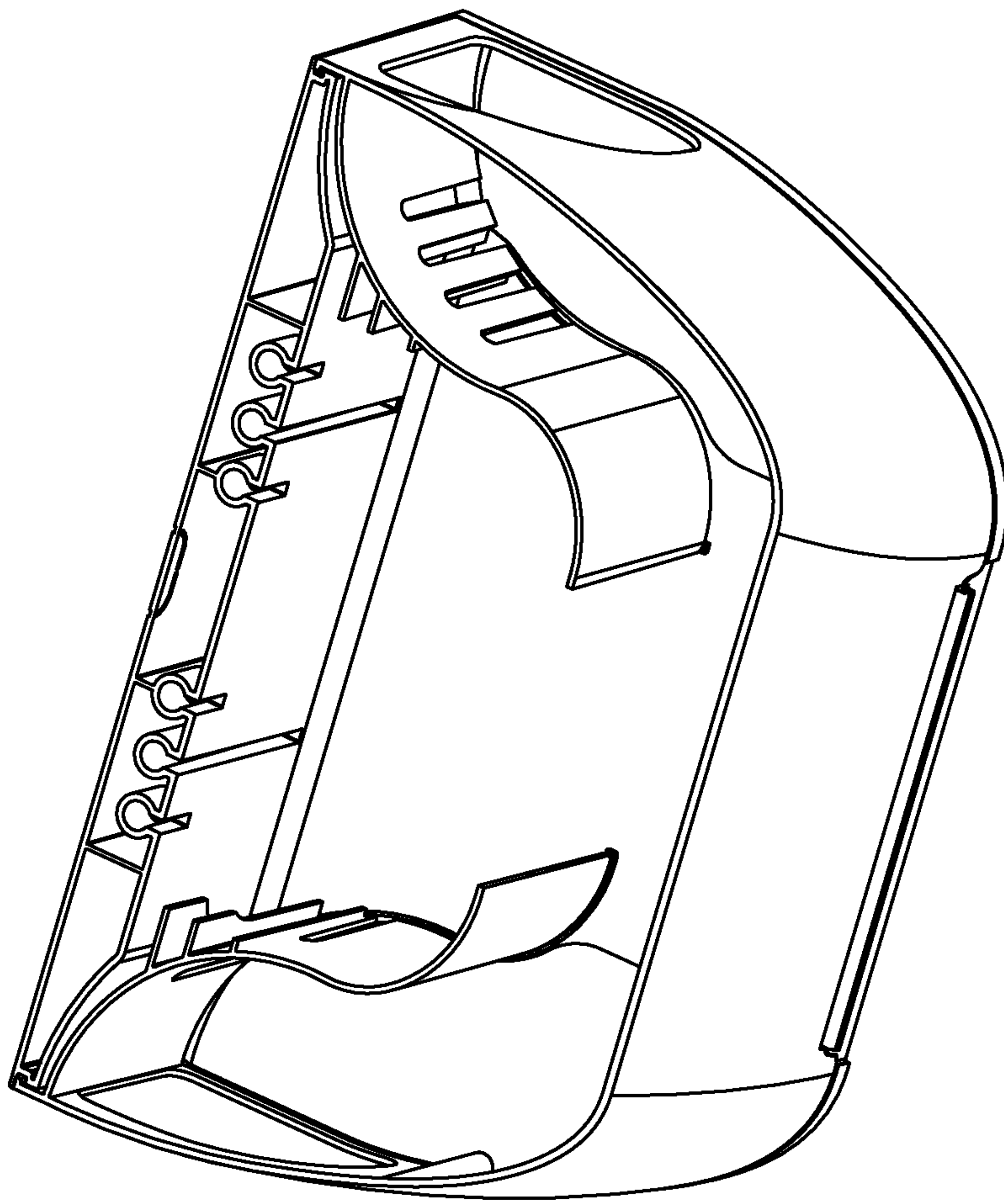
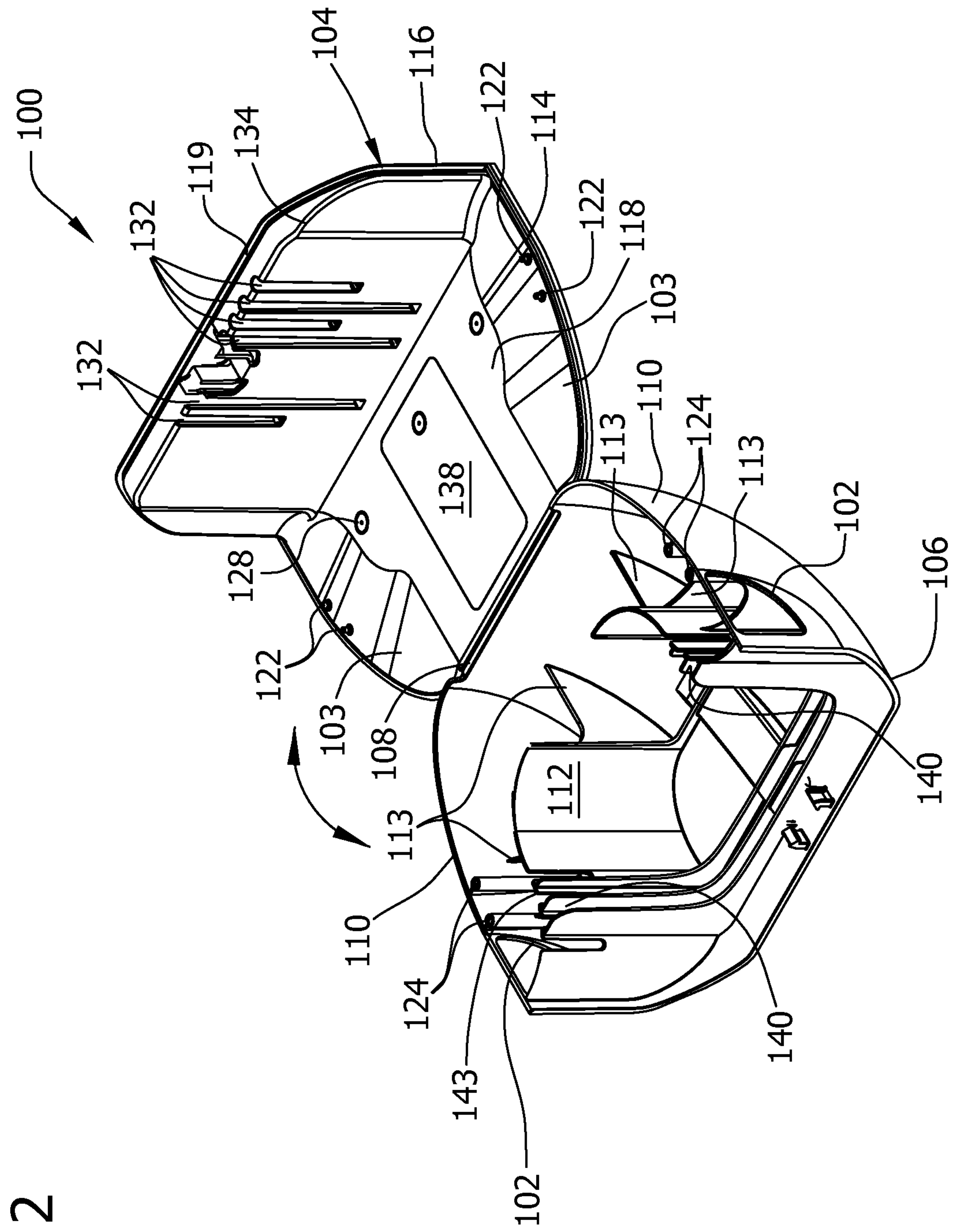


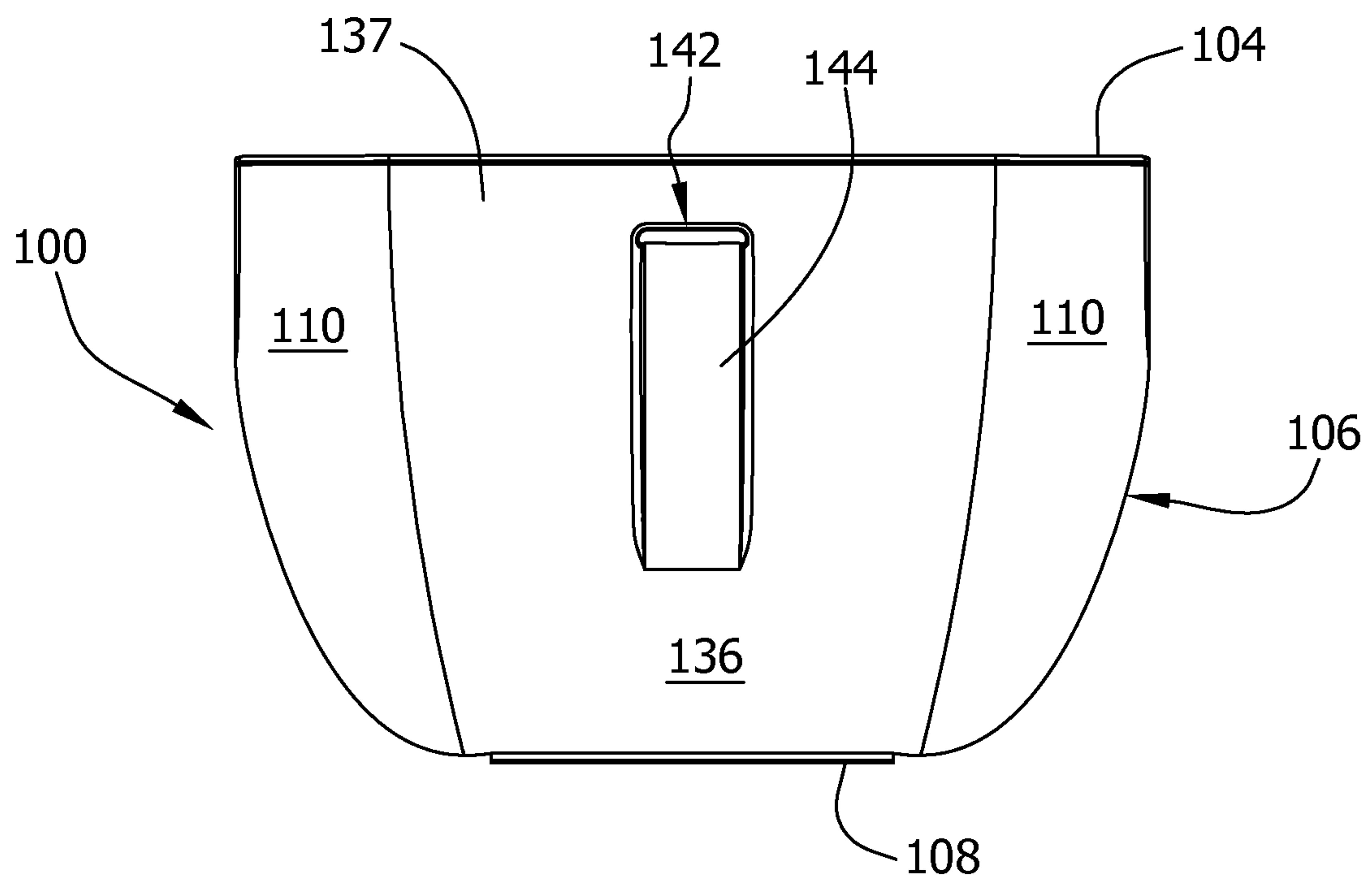
FIG. 1B

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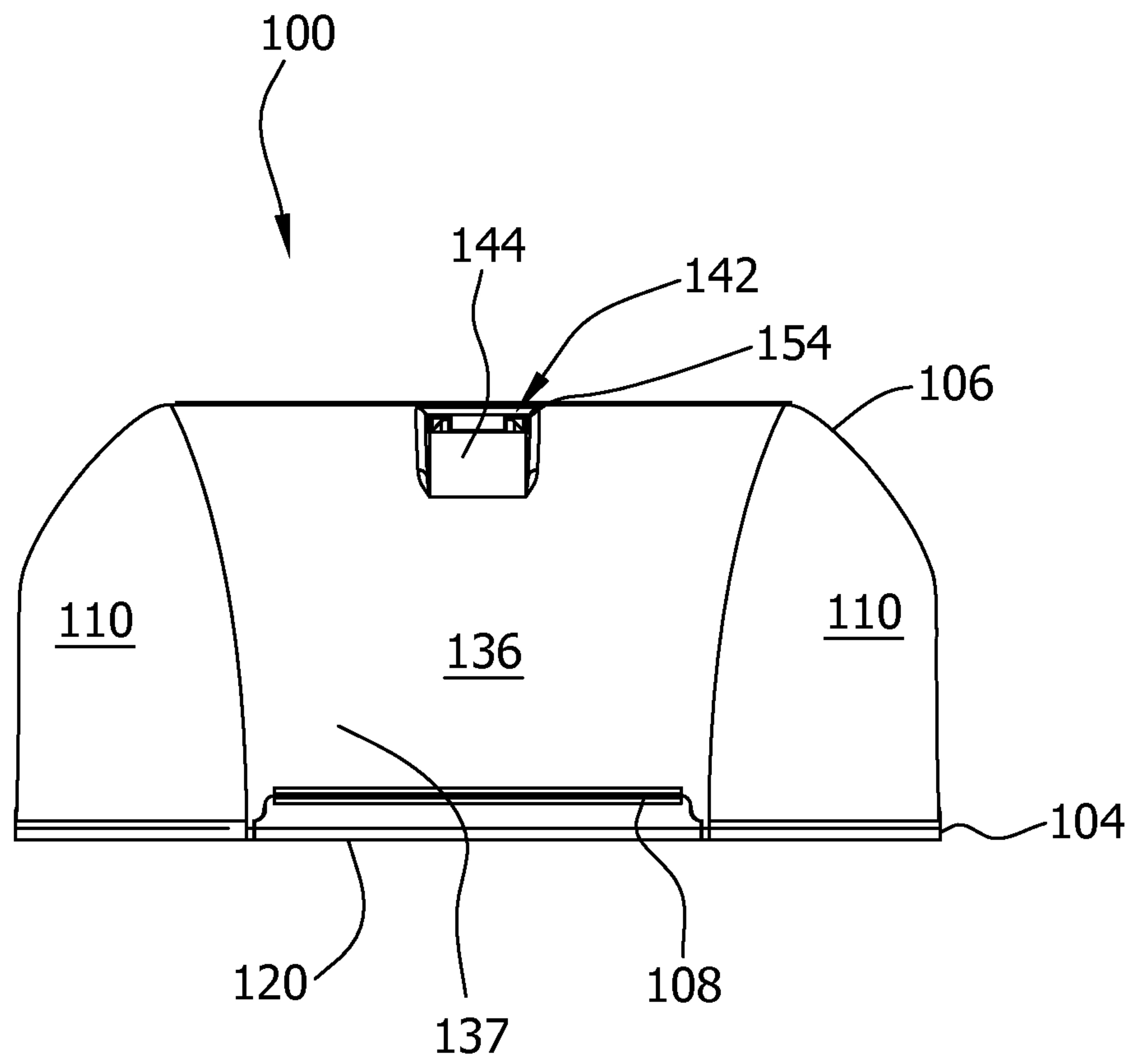
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FIG. 3



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FIG. 4



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FIG. 5A

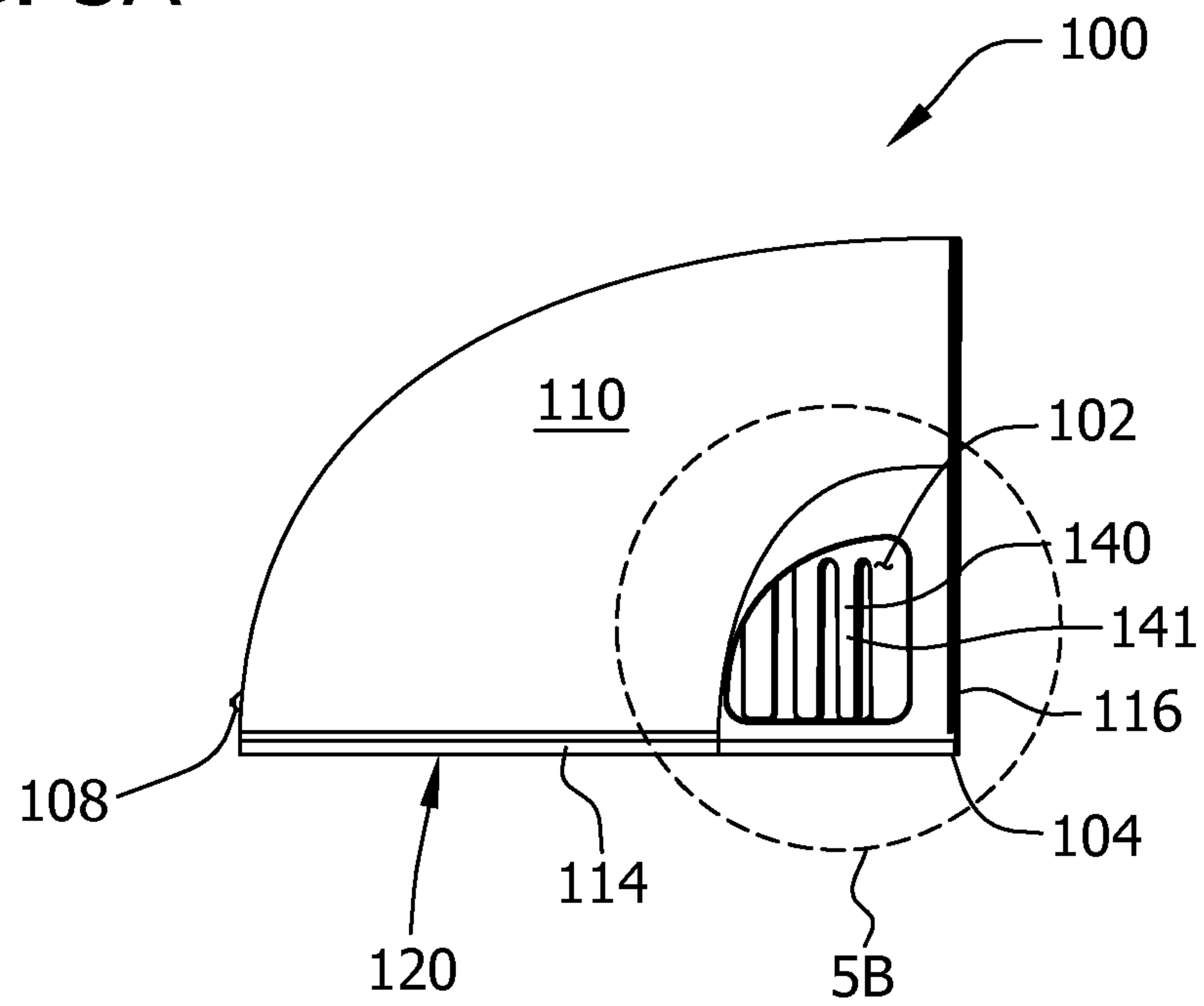
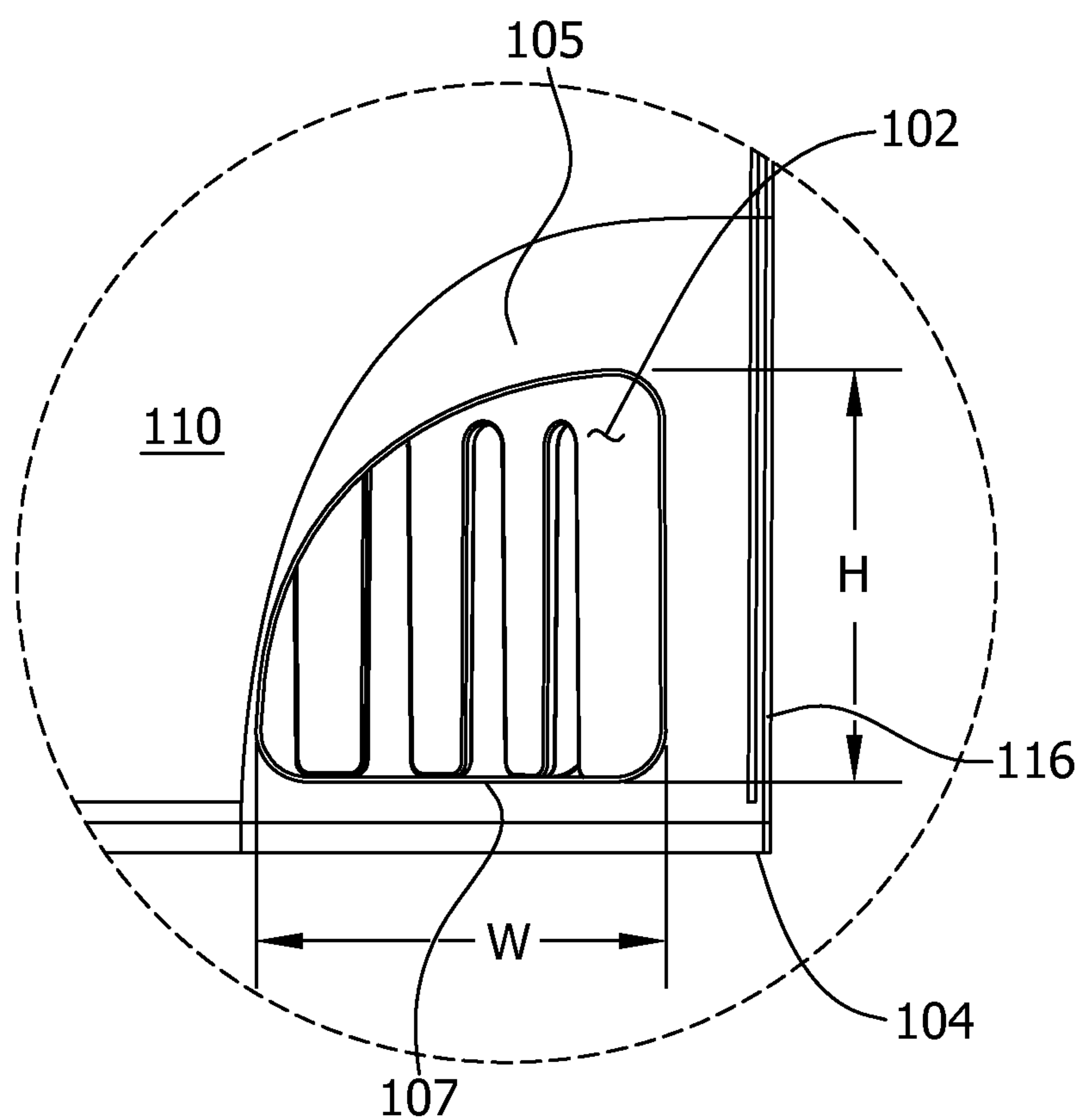
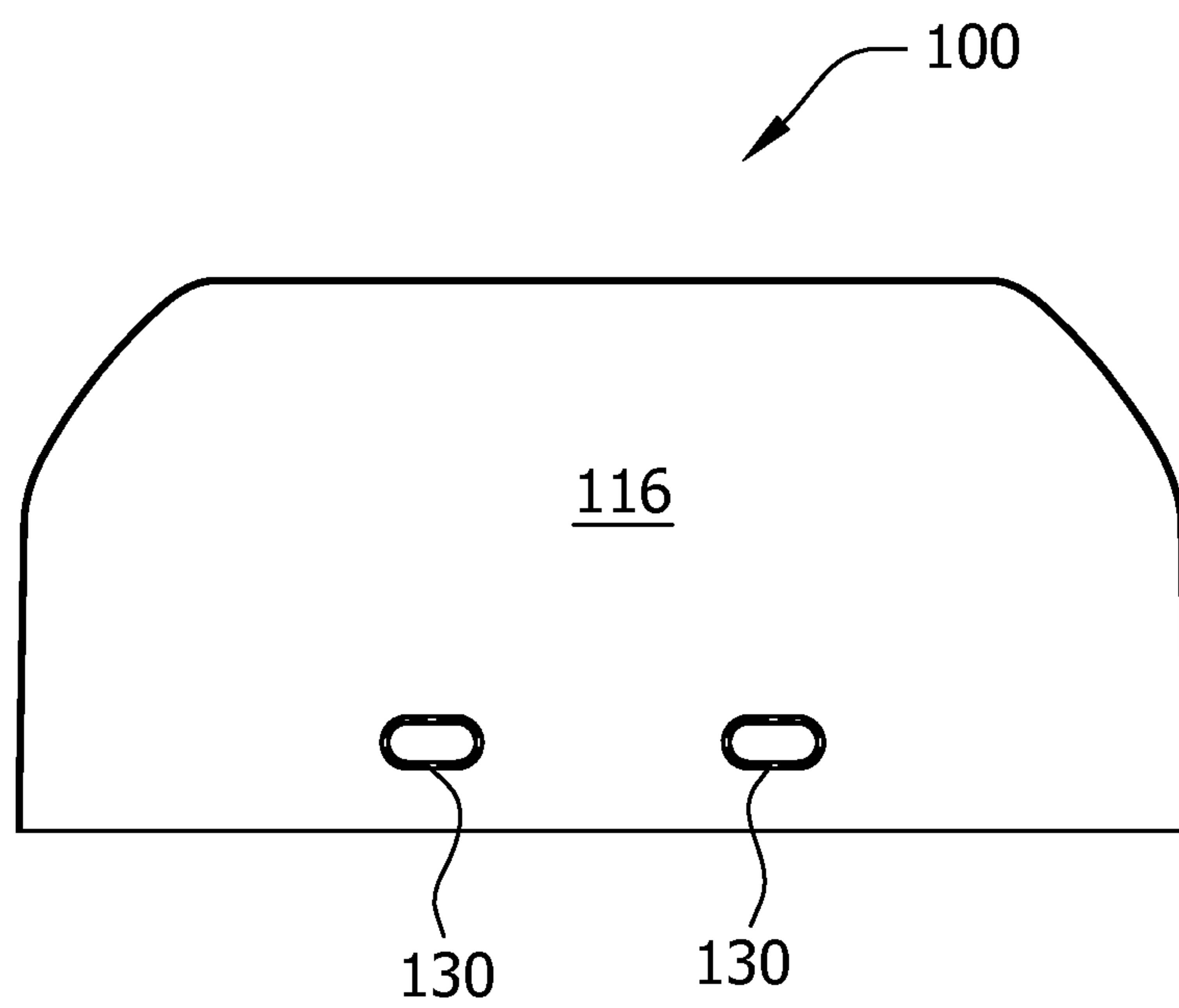


FIG. 5B



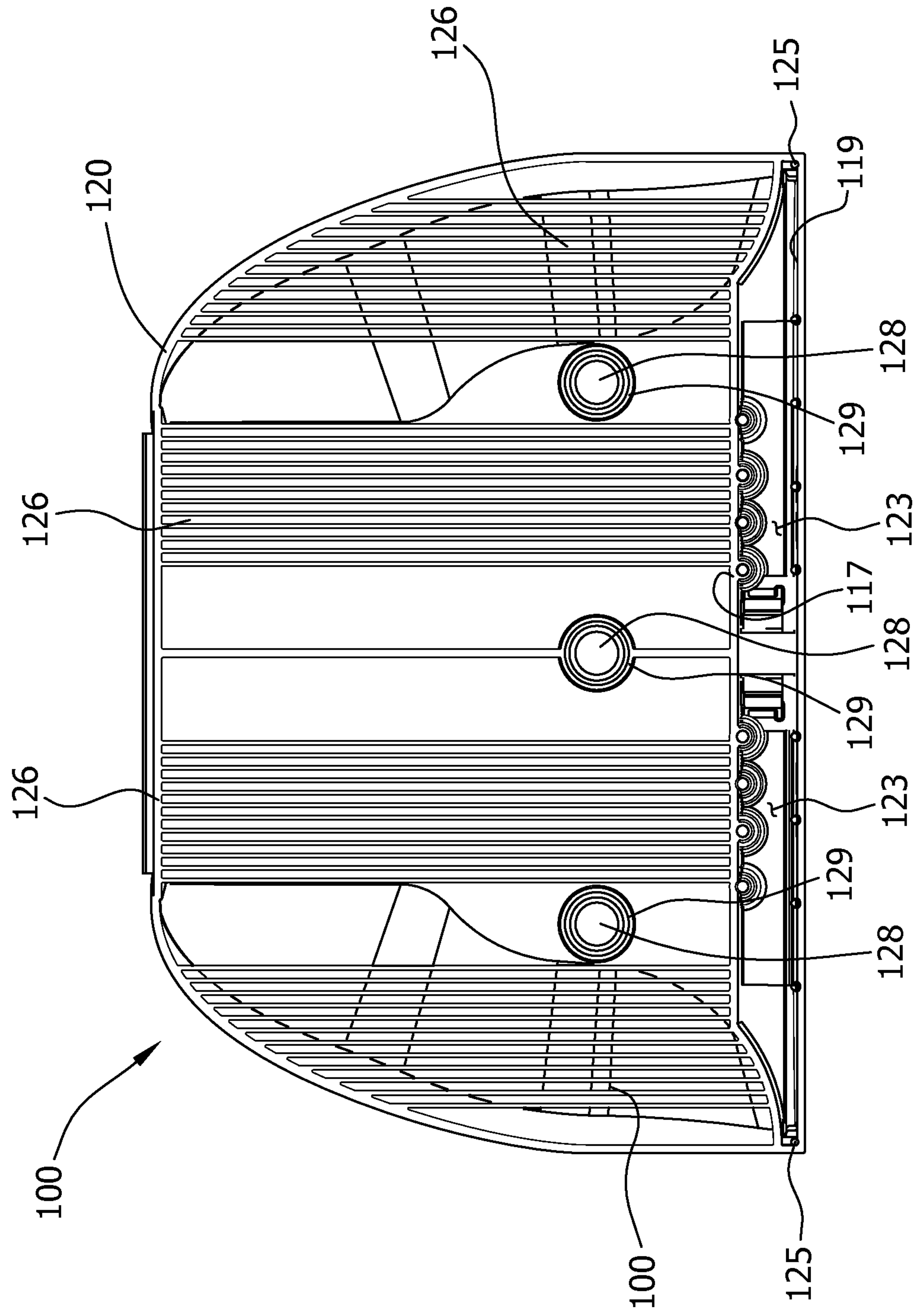
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FIG. 6



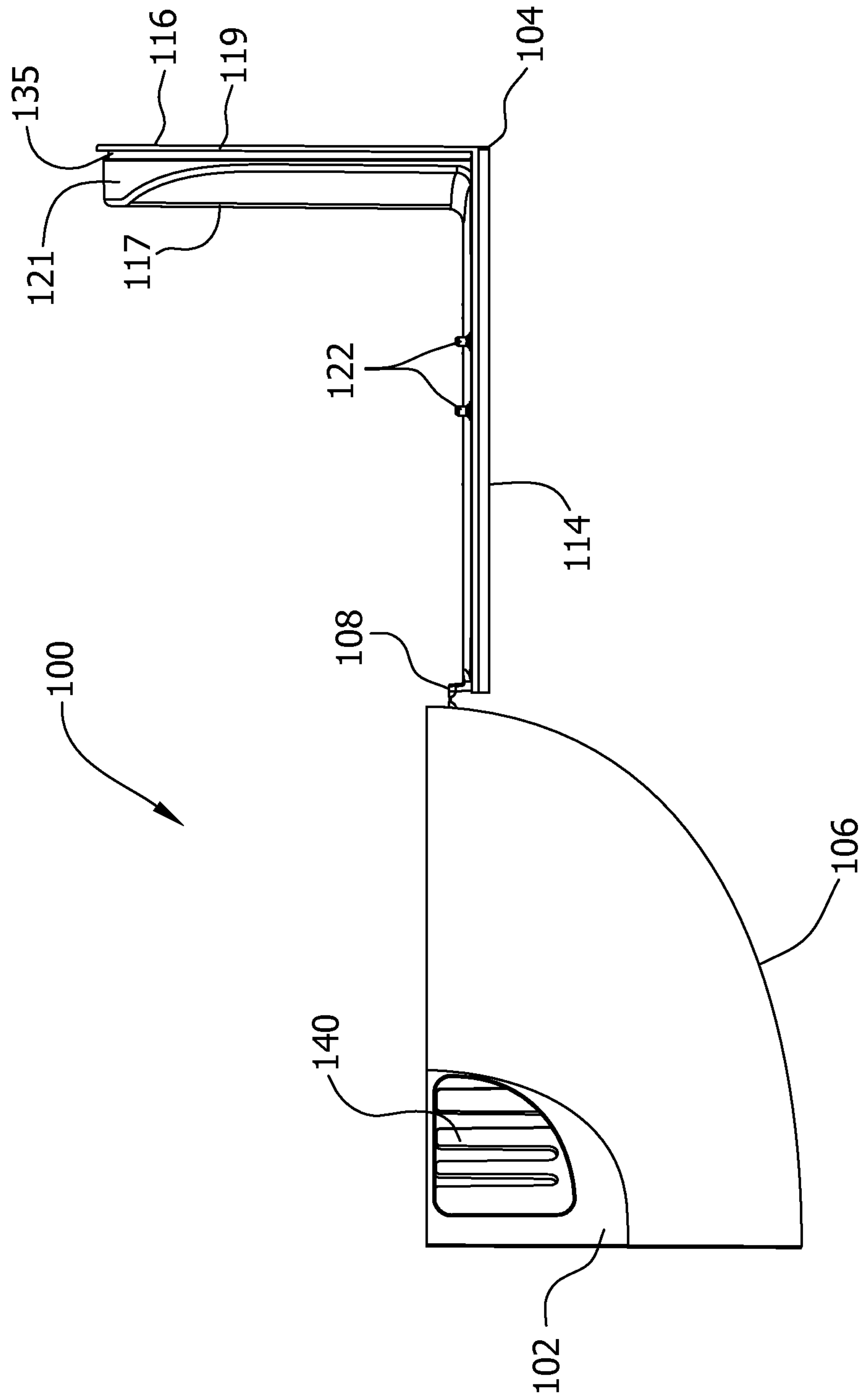
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FIG. 7



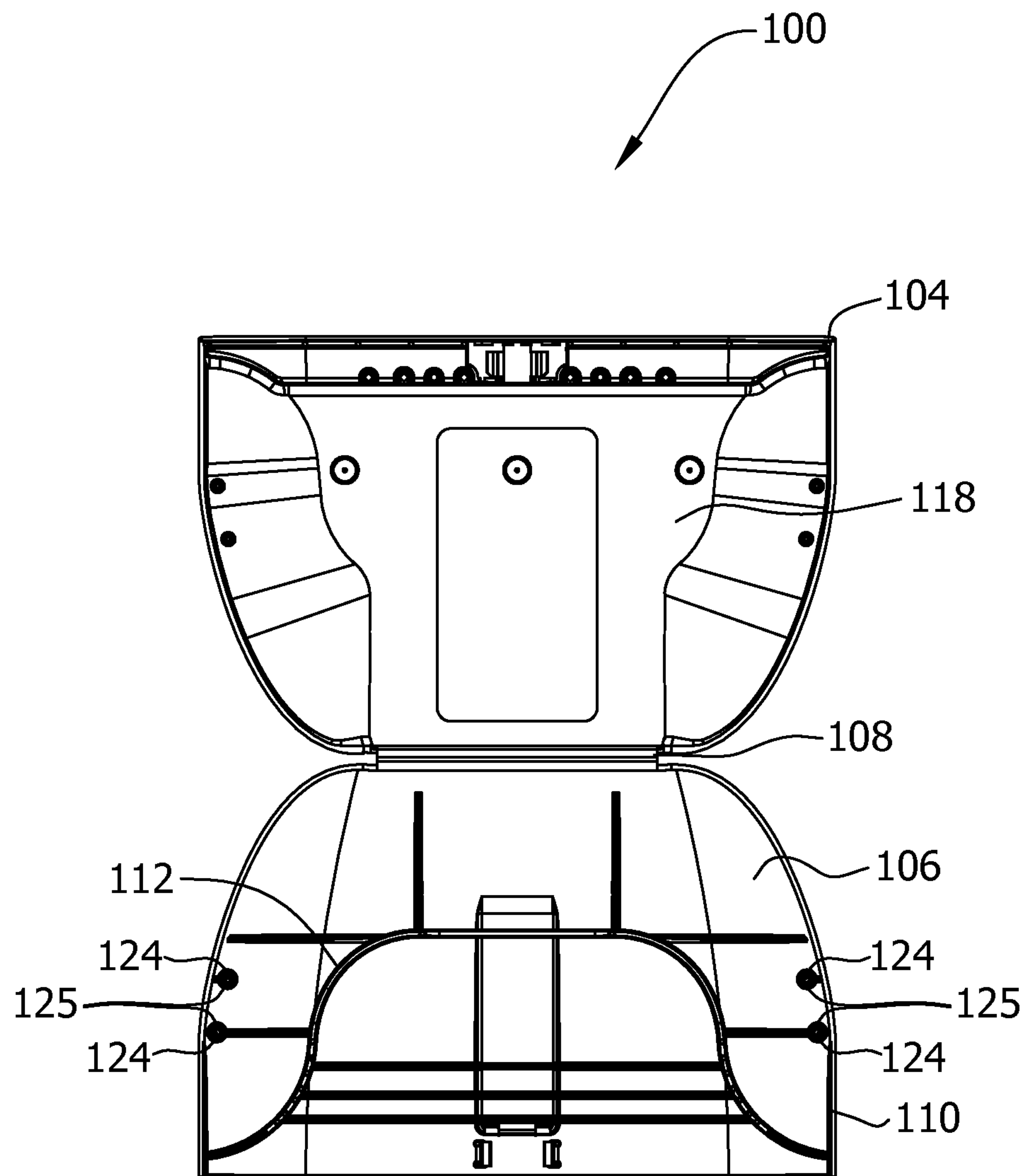
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FIG. 8



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FIG. 9



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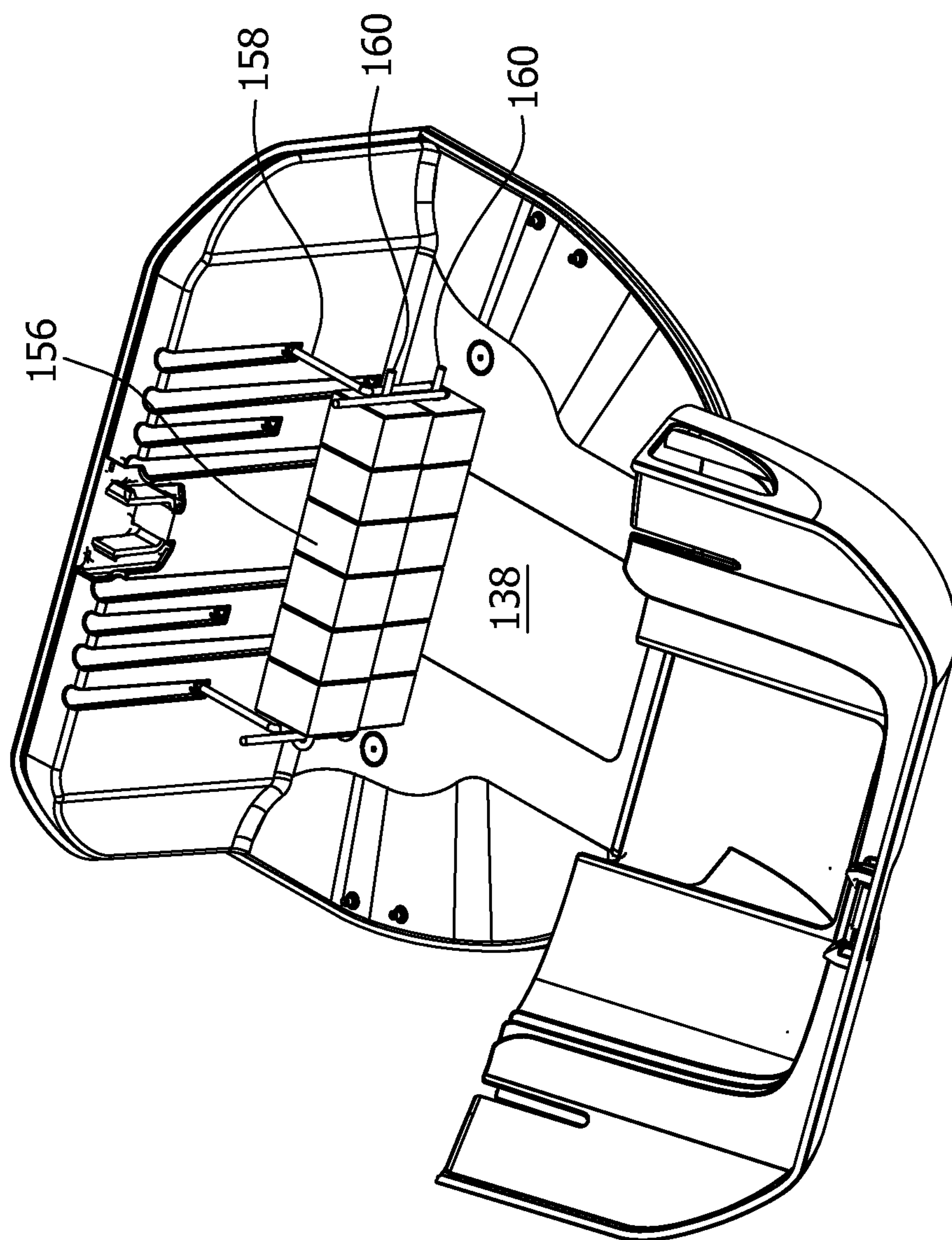


FIG. 10

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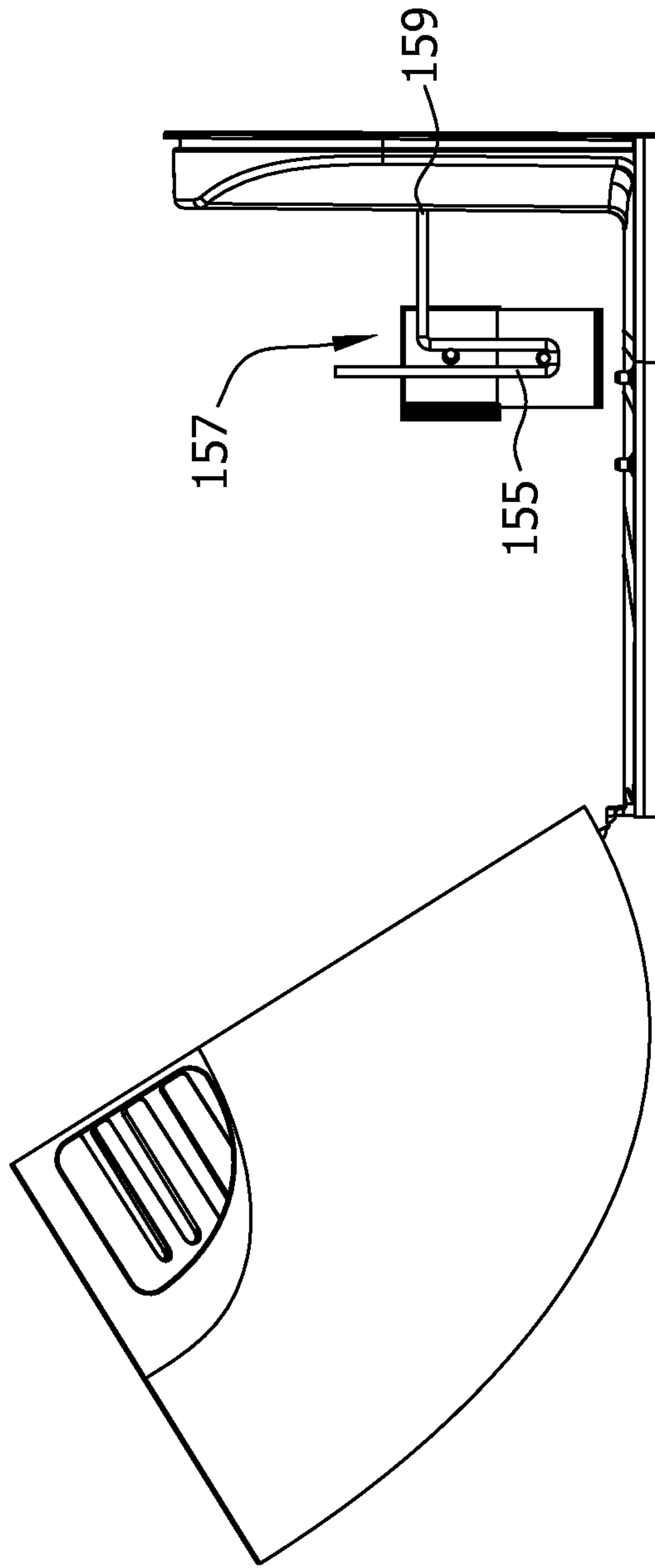


FIG. 11

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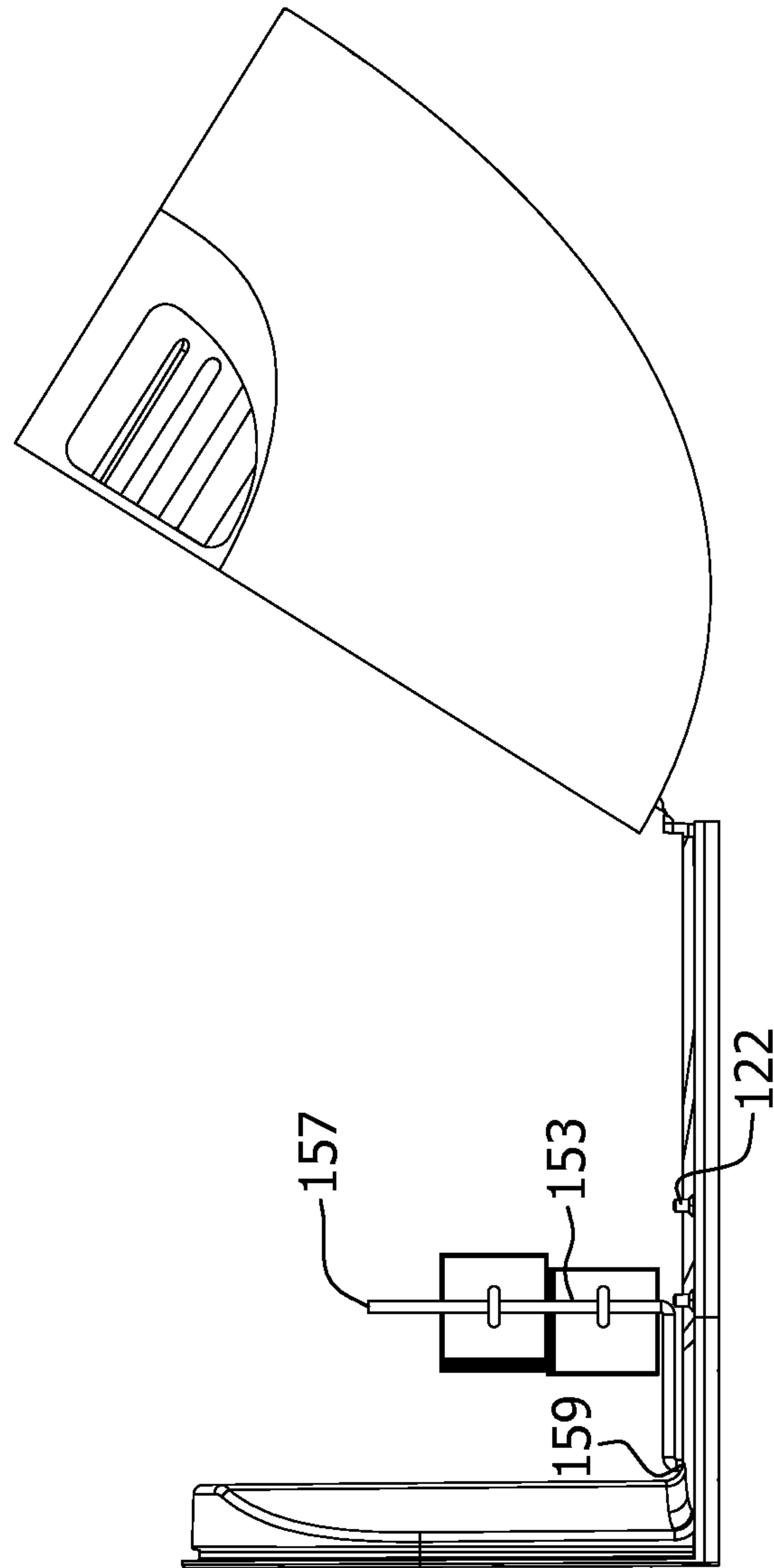


FIG. 12

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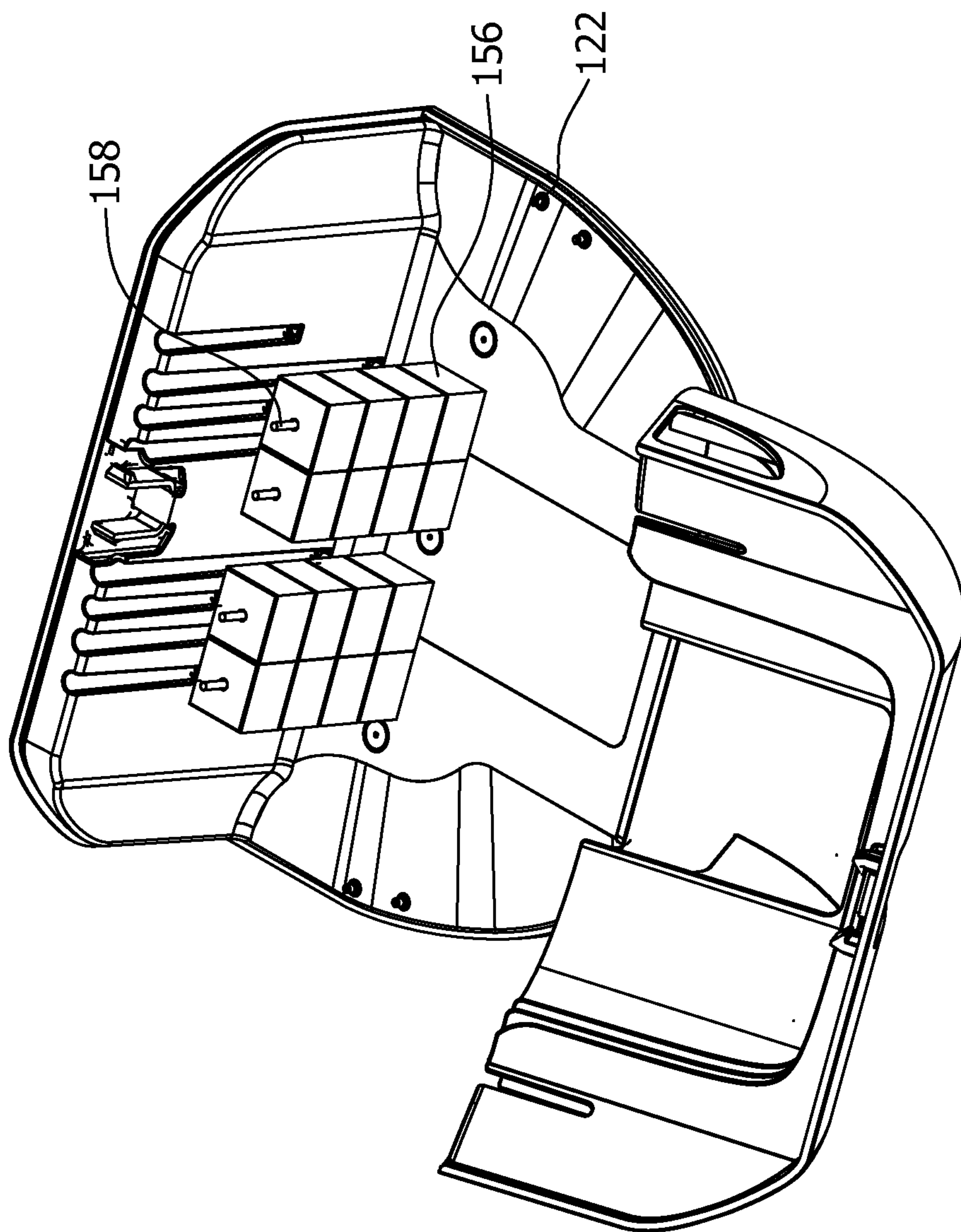


FIG. 13

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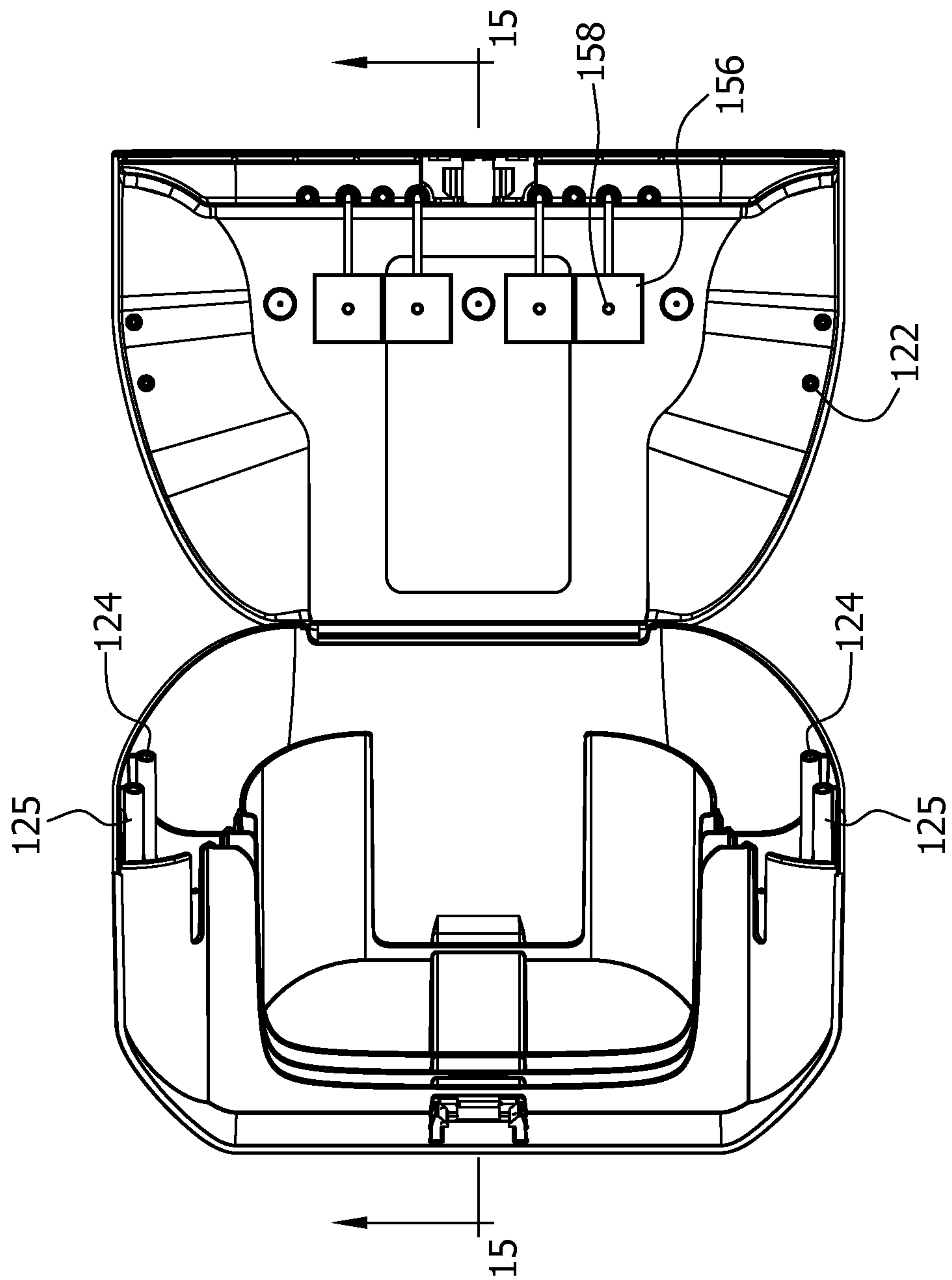


FIG. 14

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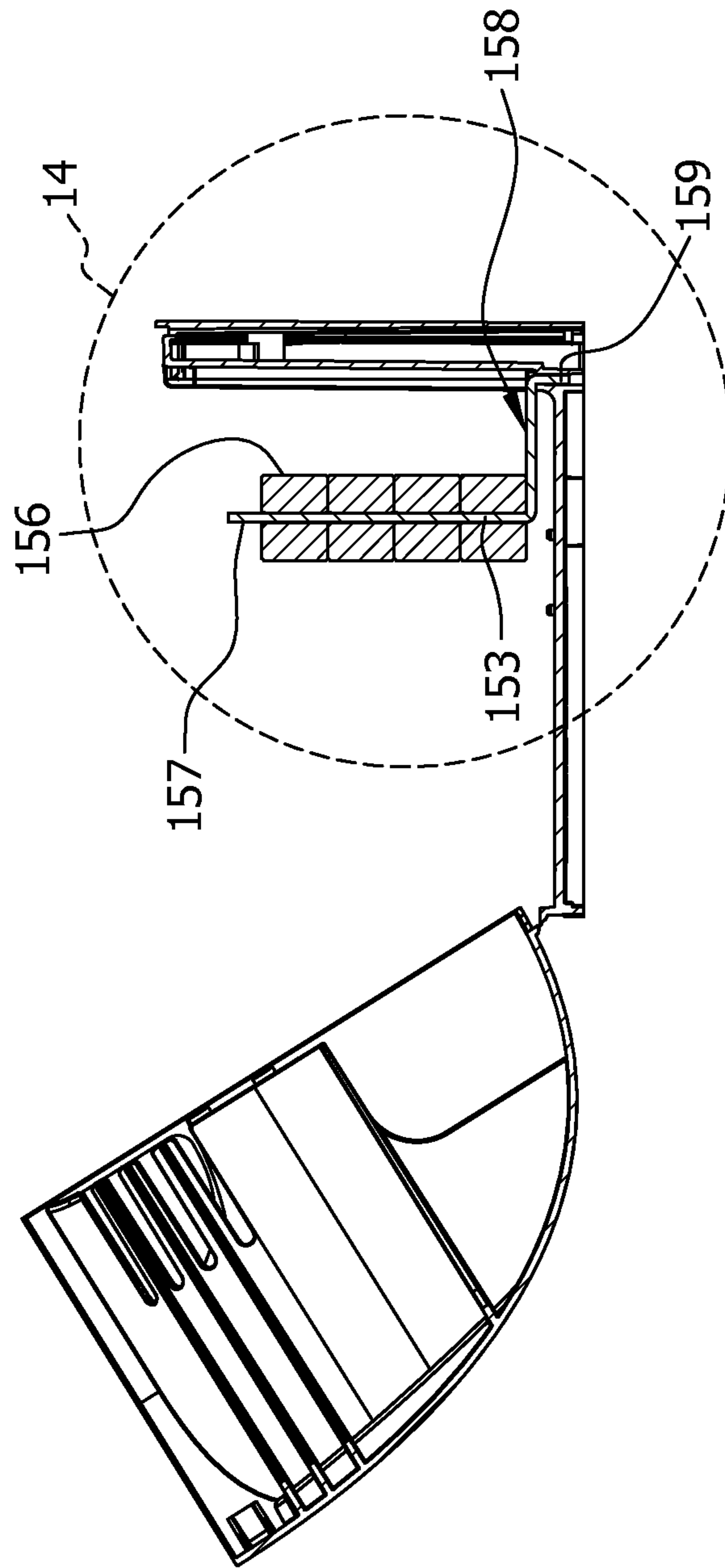
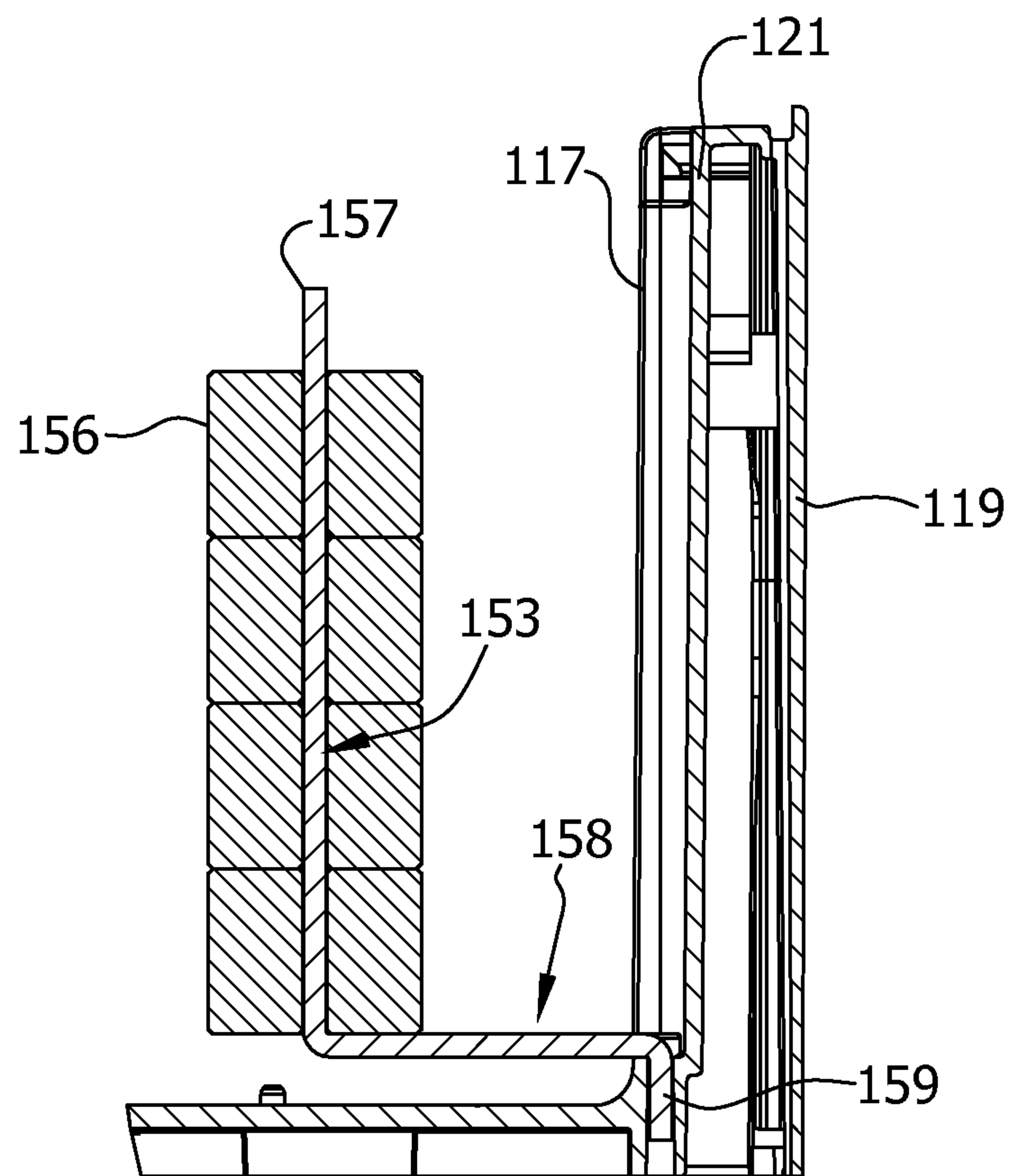


FIG. 15

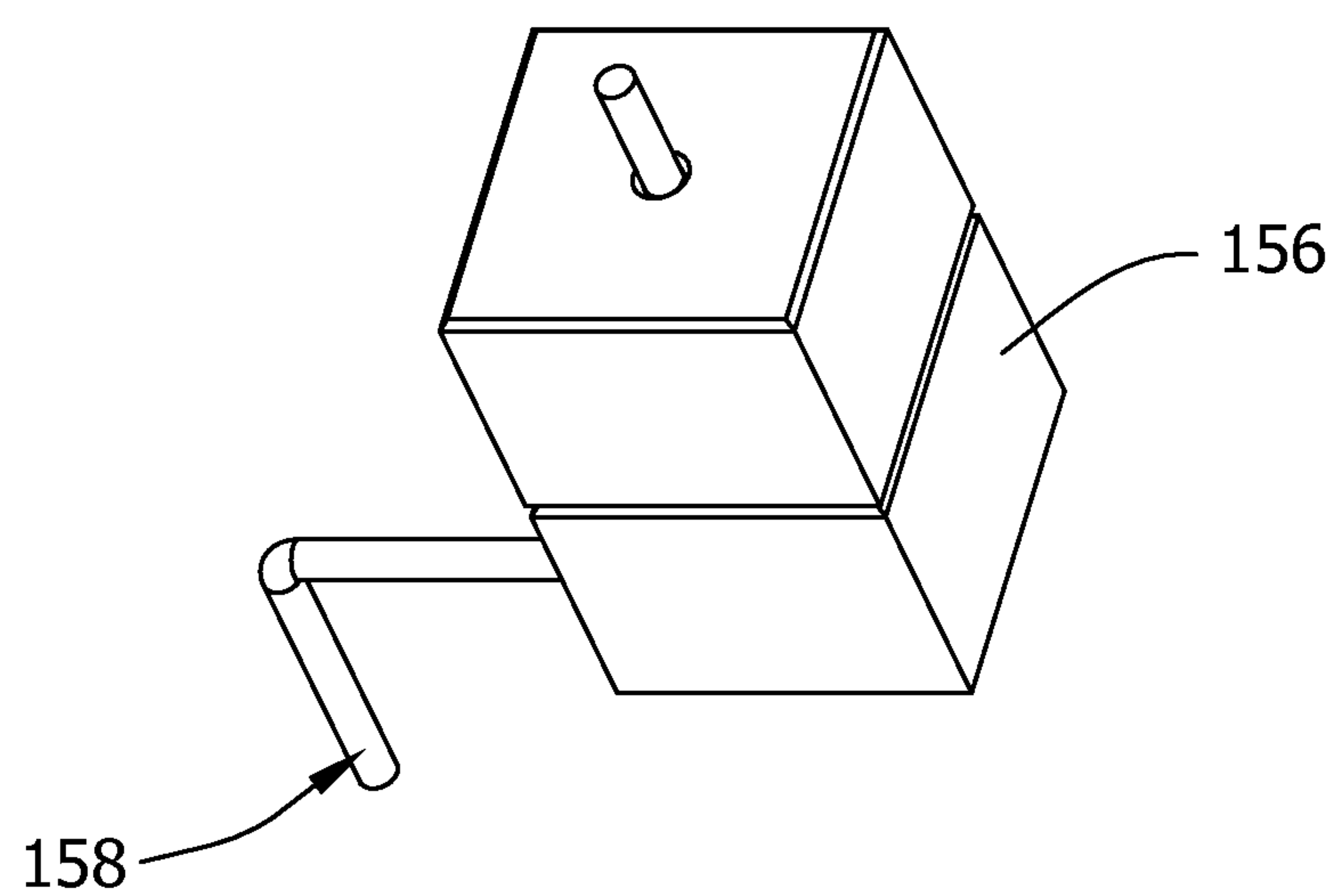
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FIG. 16



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FIG. 17



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FIG. 18

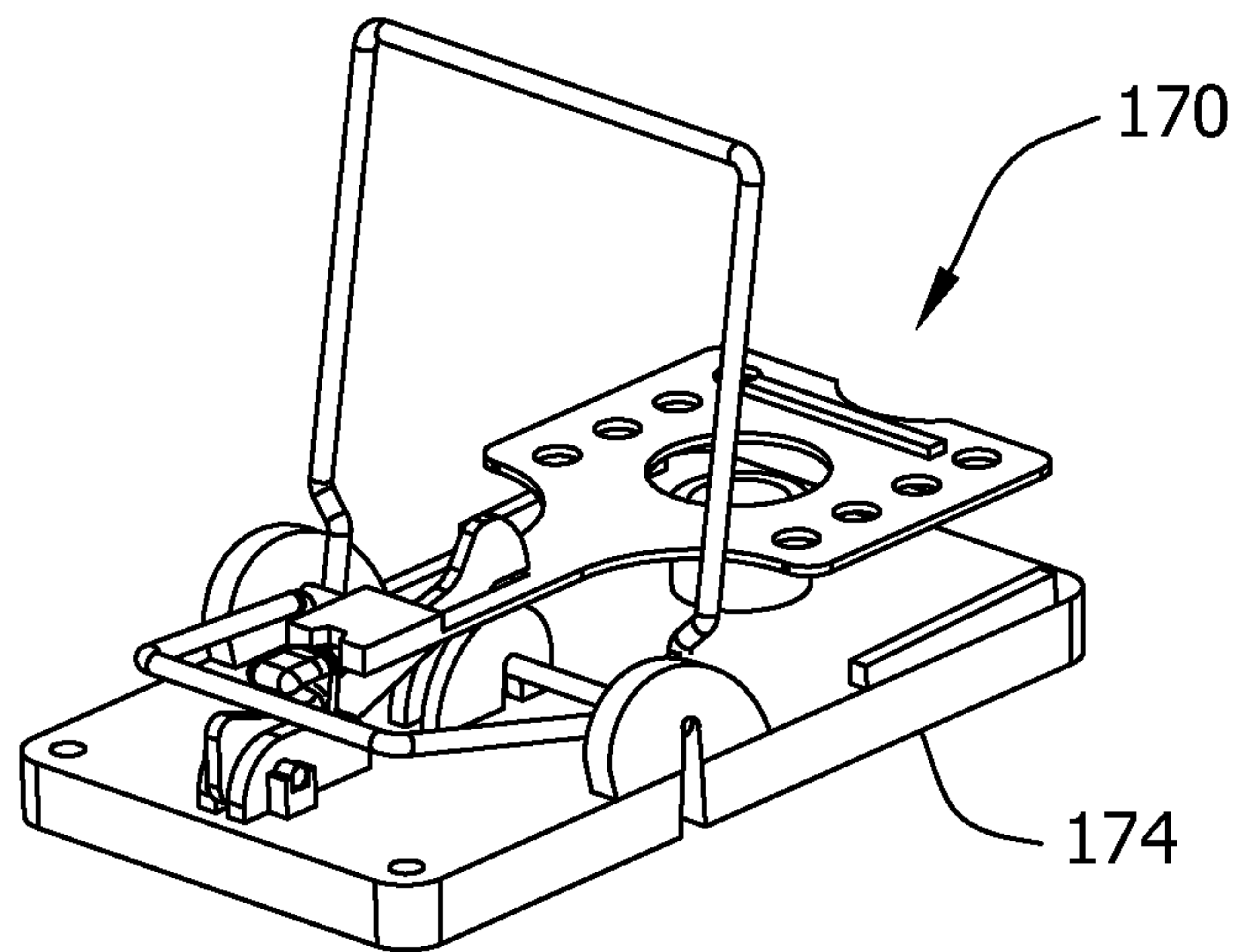
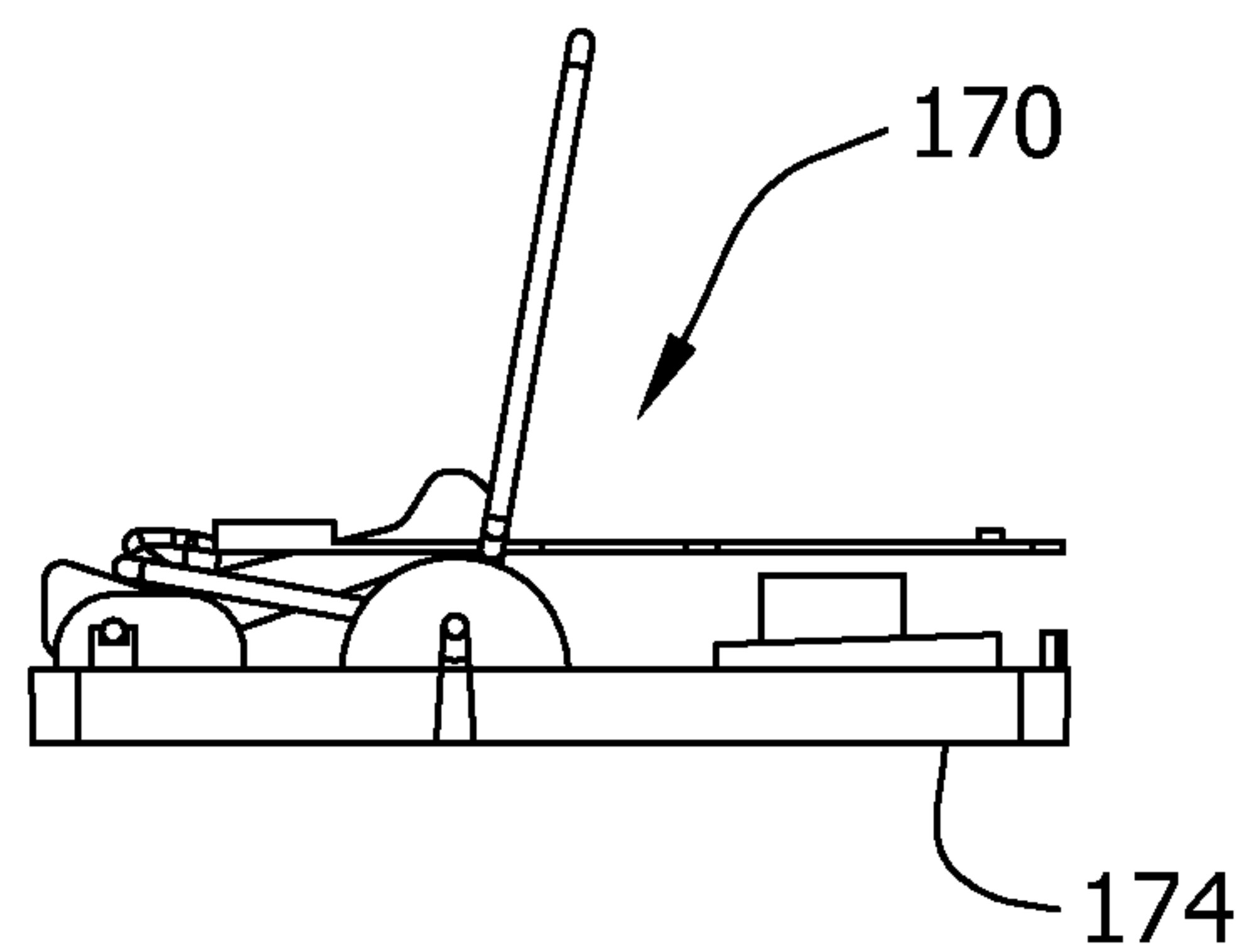
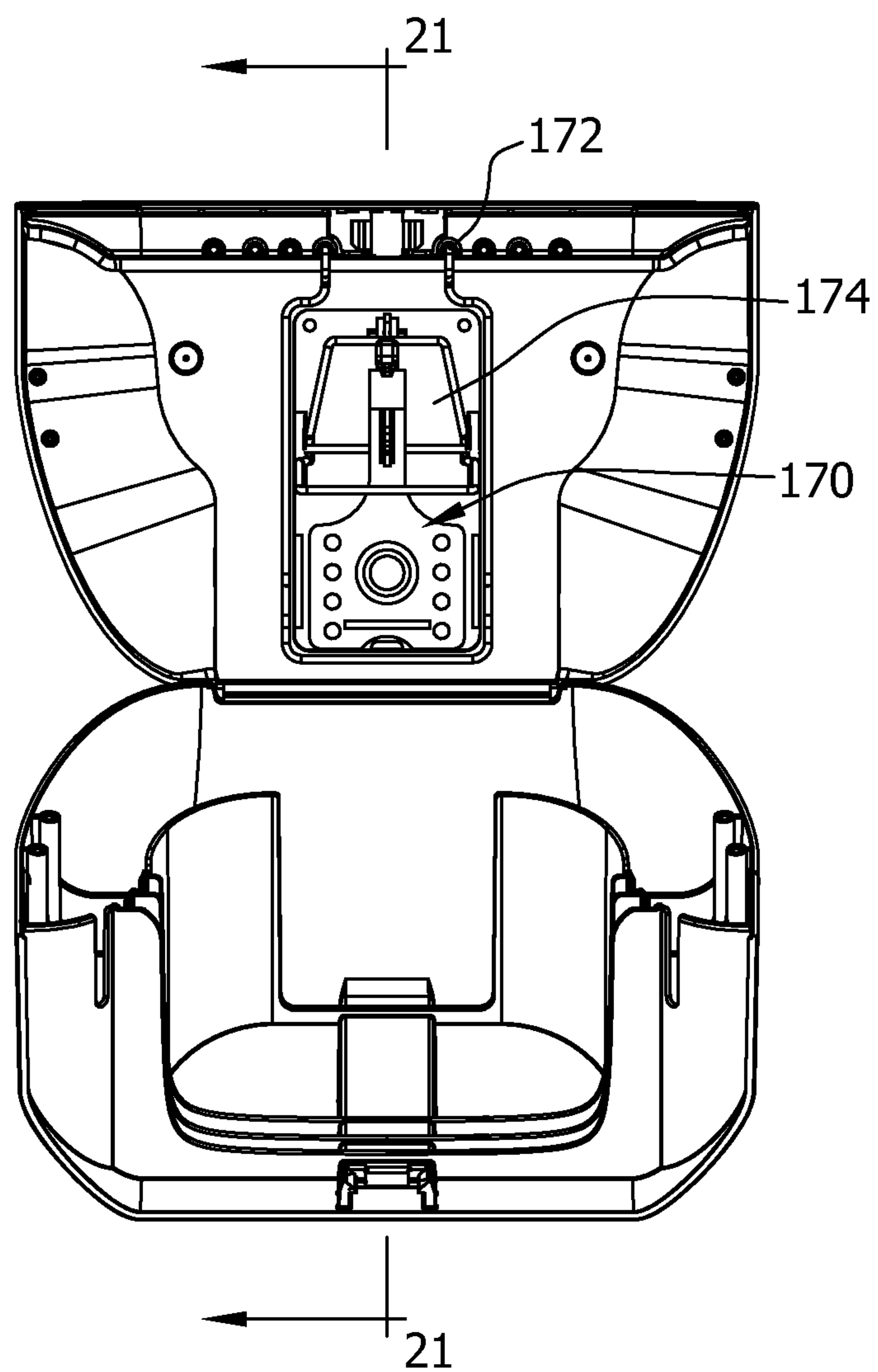


FIG. 19



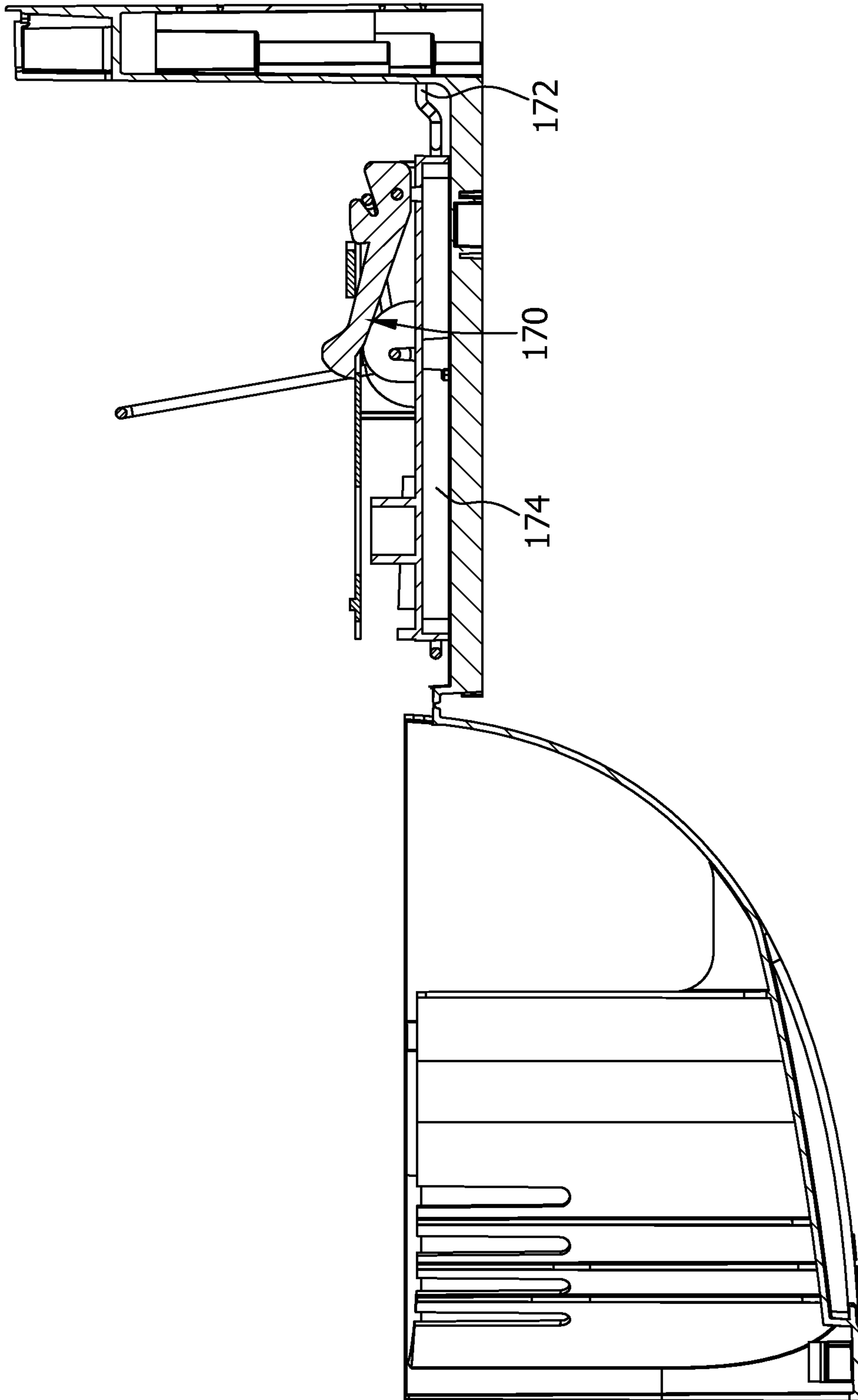
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FIG. 20



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FIG. 21



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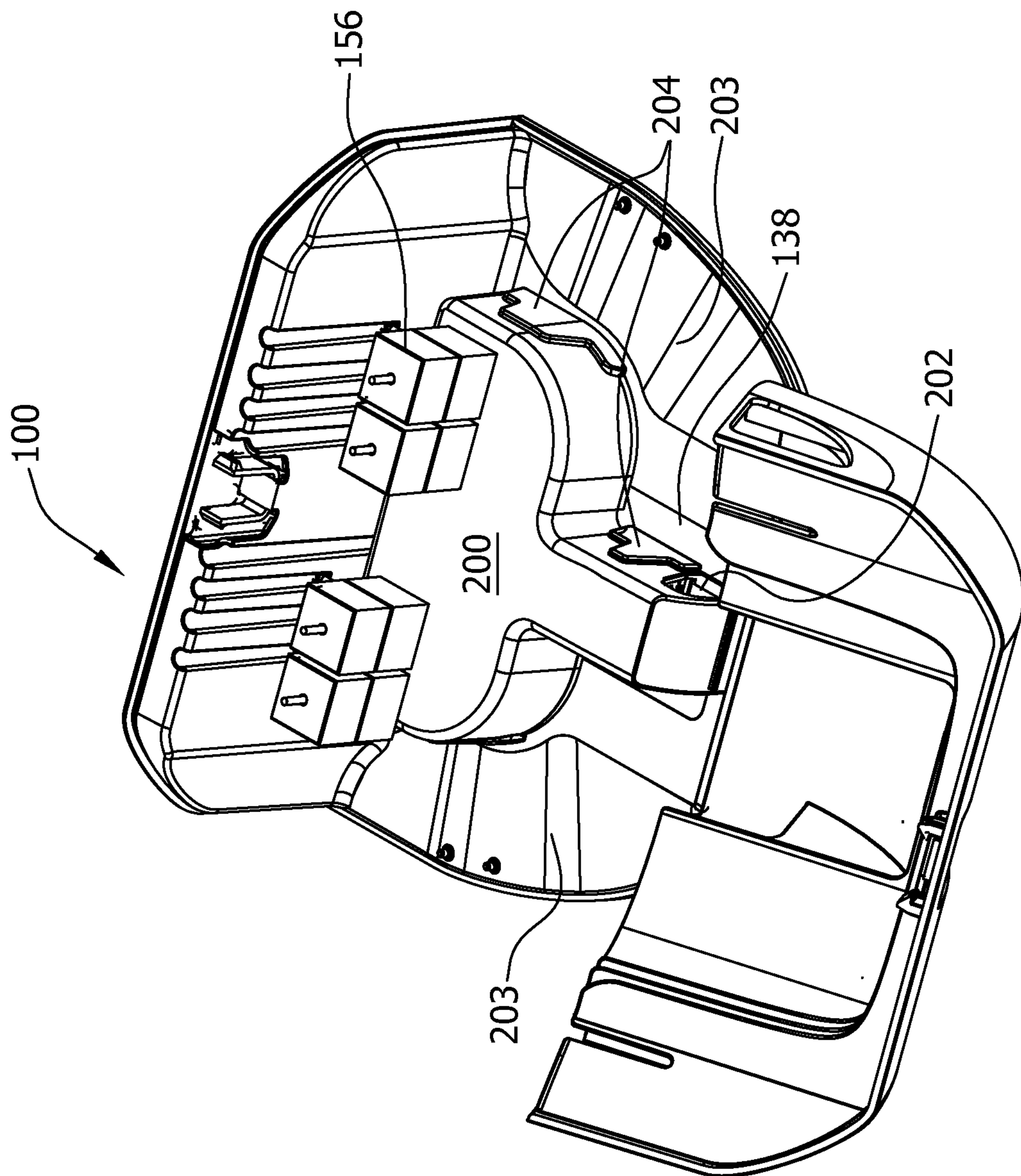
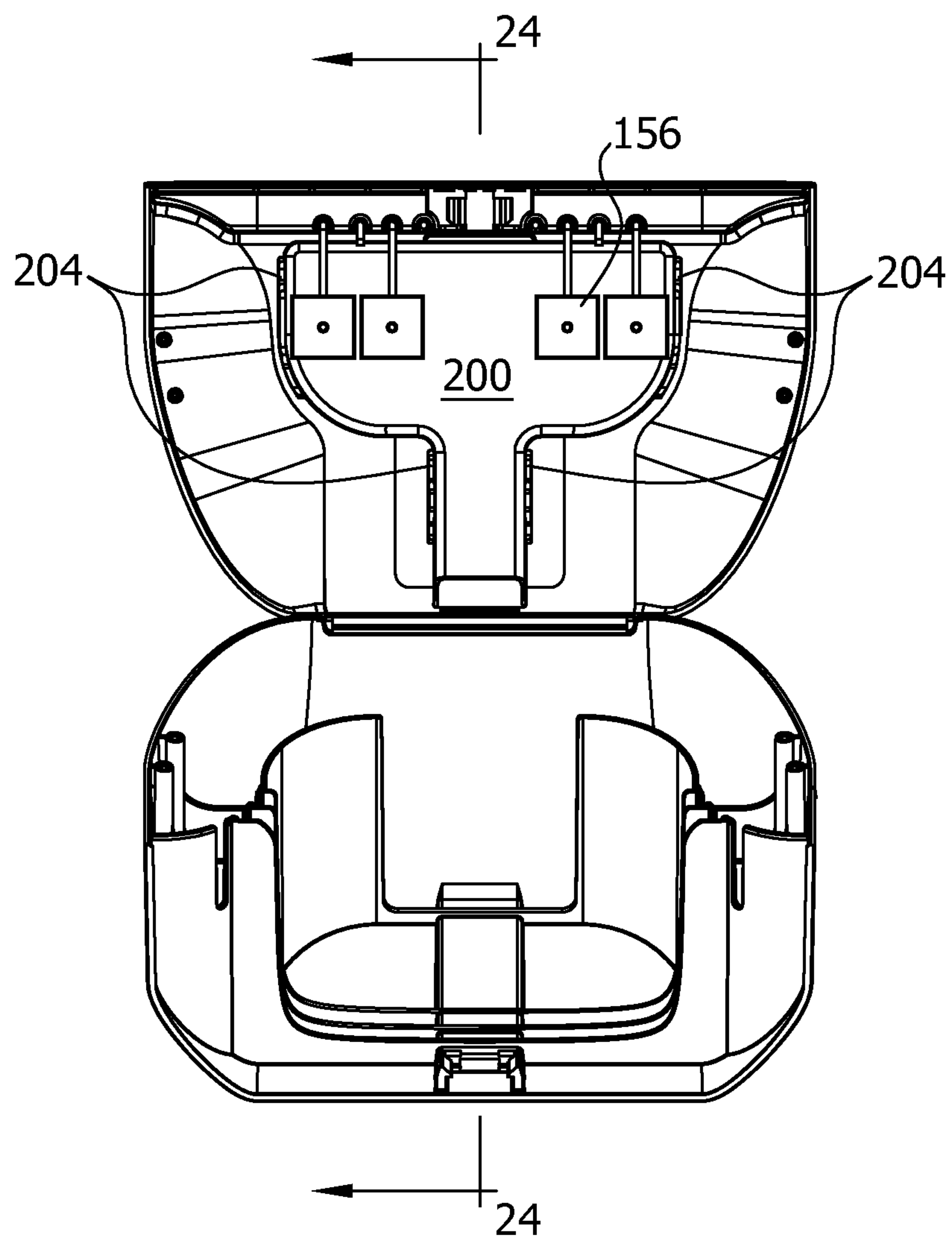


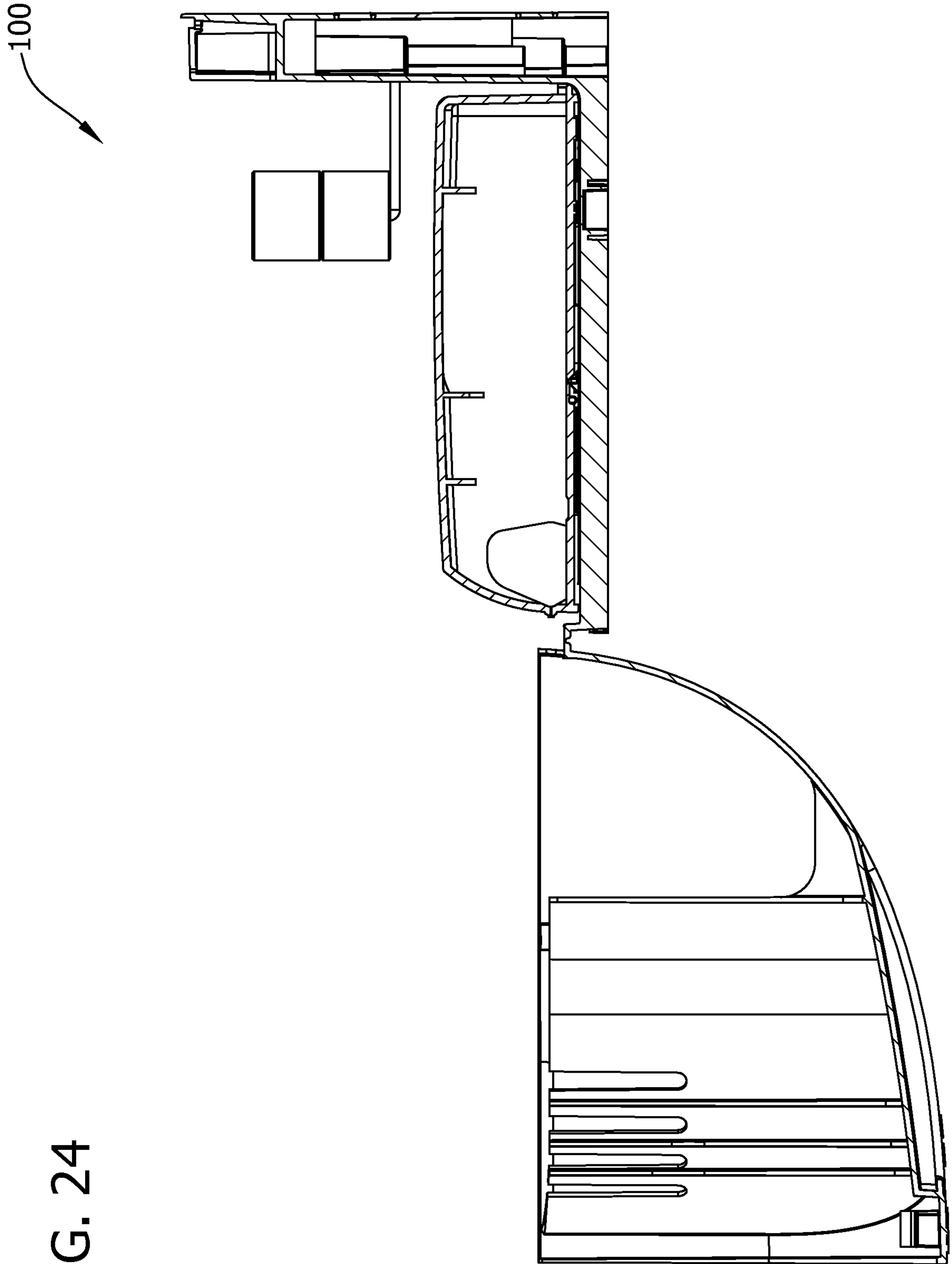
FIG. 22

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FIG. 23



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FIG. 25

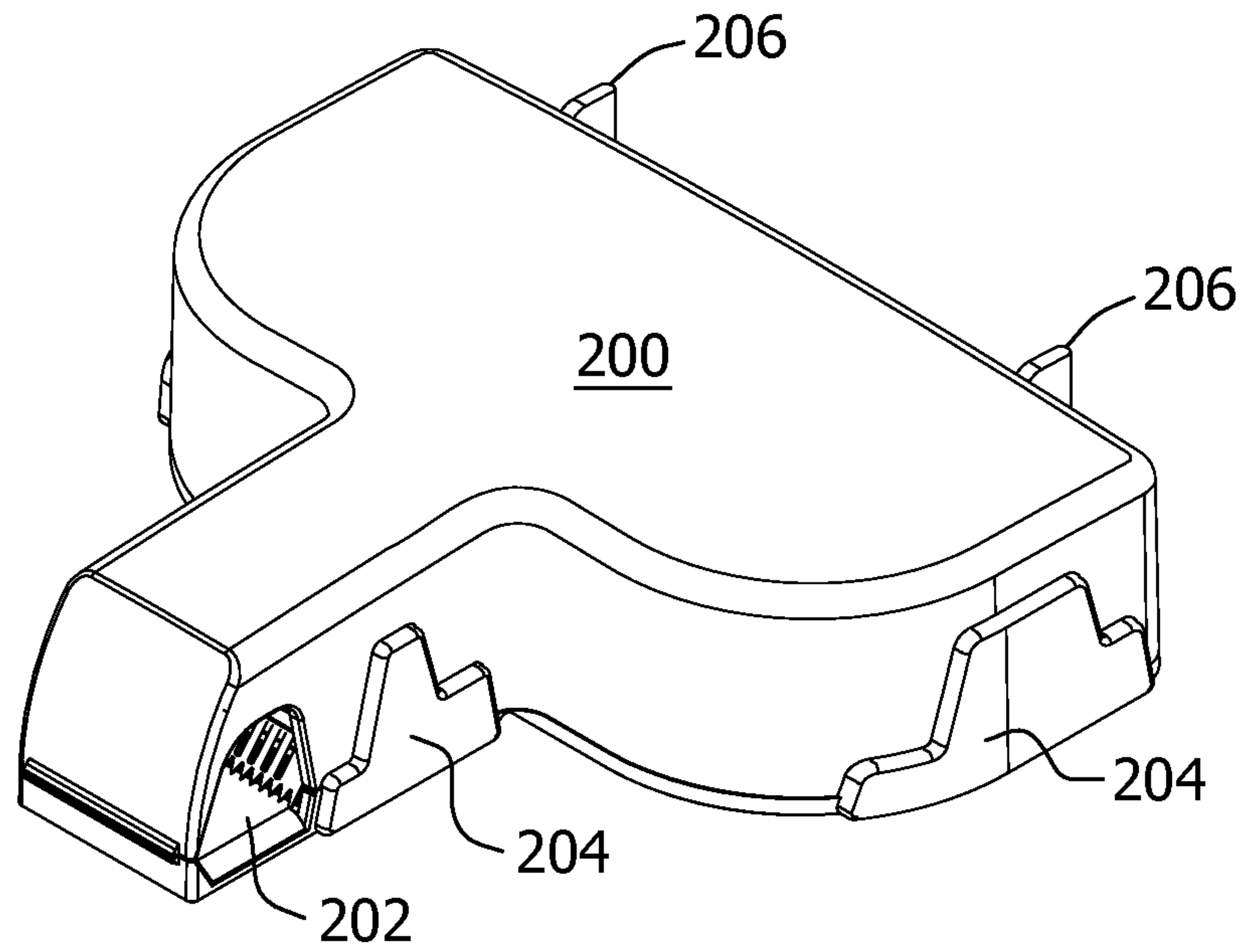
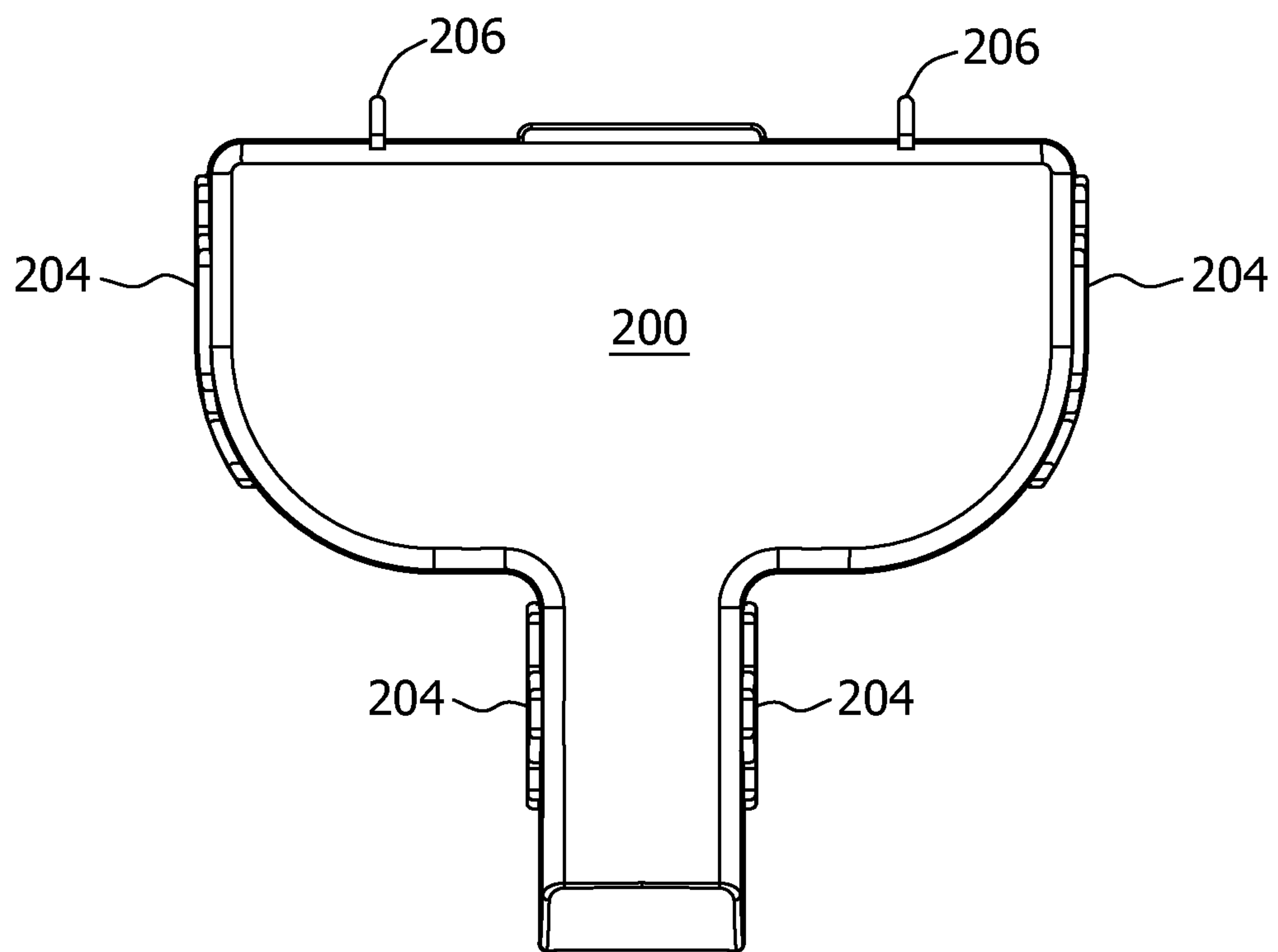


FIG. 26



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FIG. 27

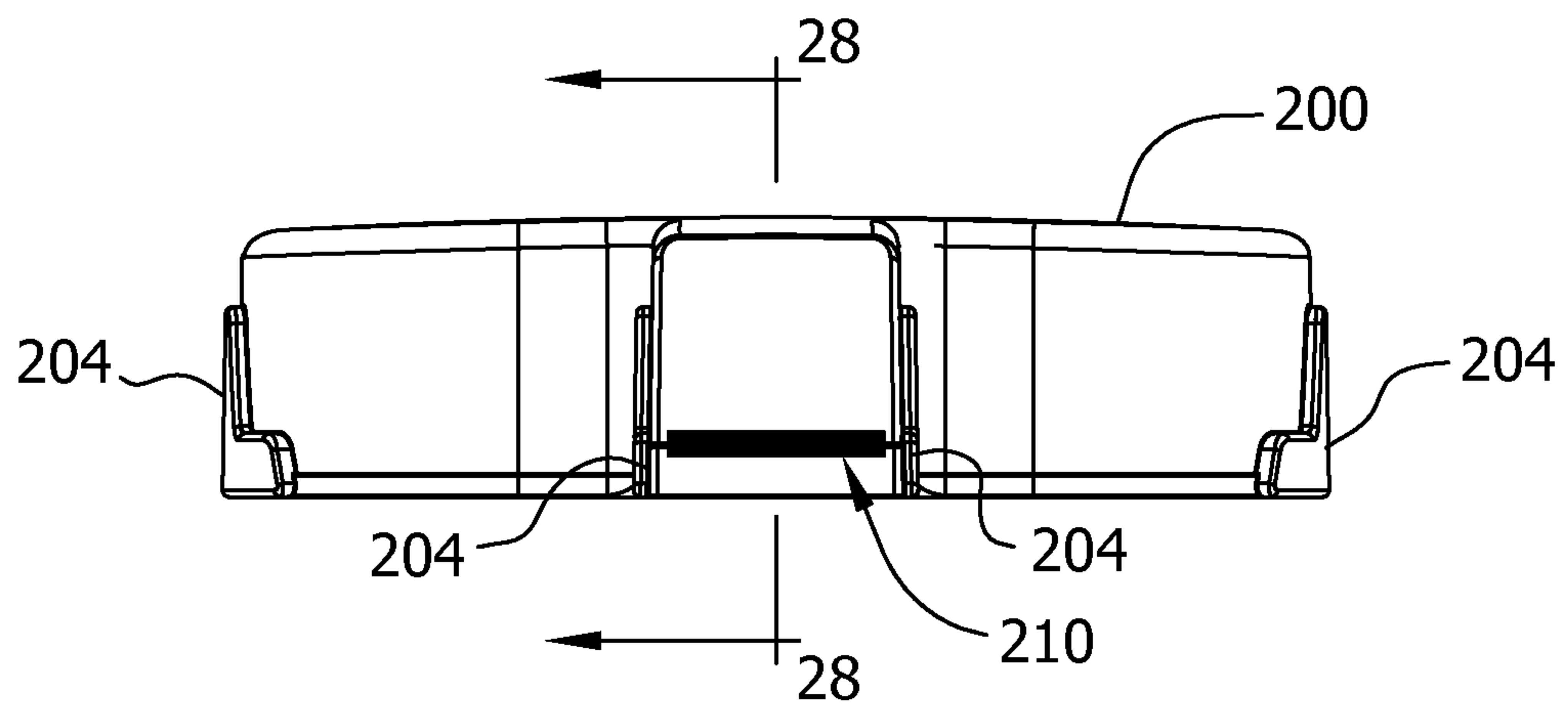
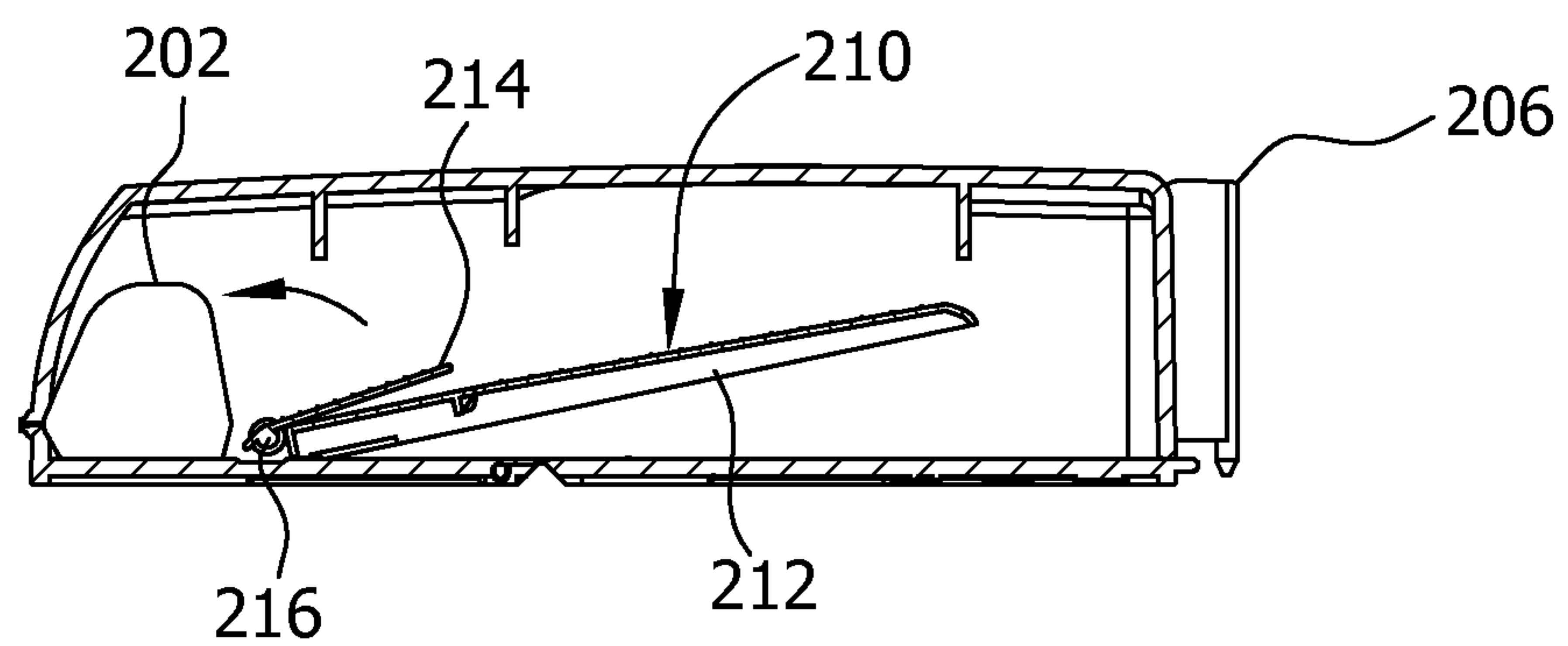


FIG. 28



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FIG. 29

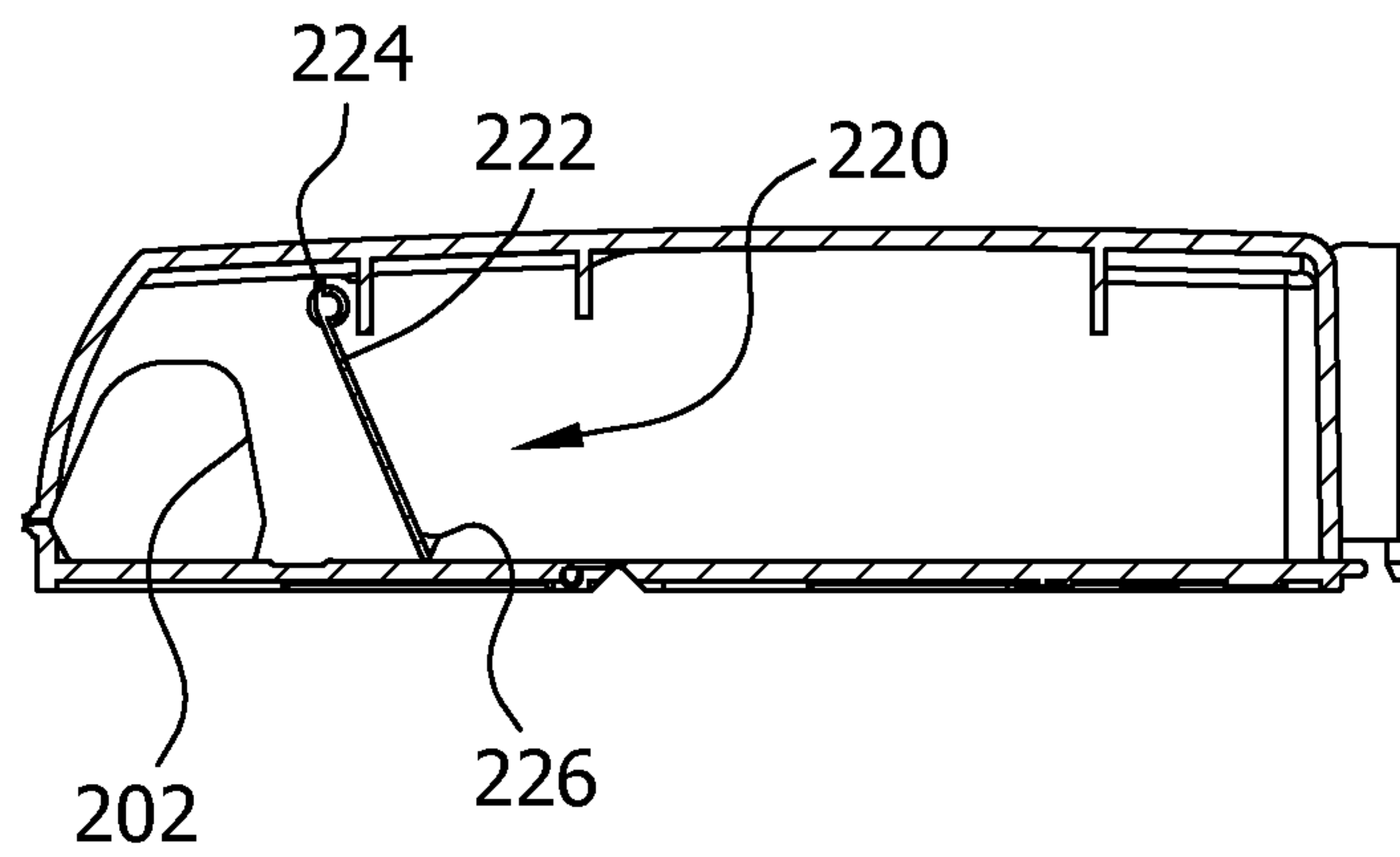
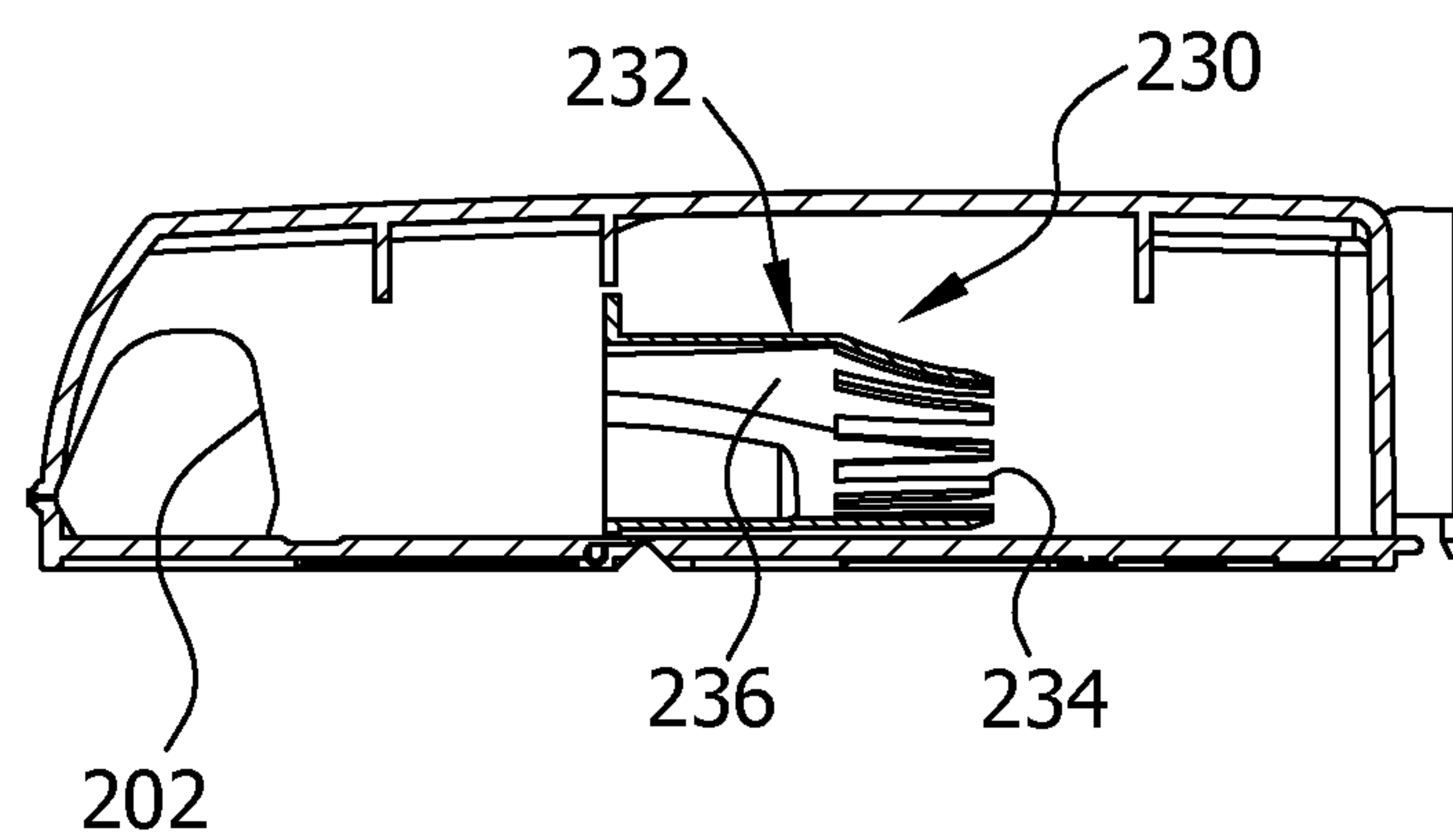


FIG. 30



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FIG. 31

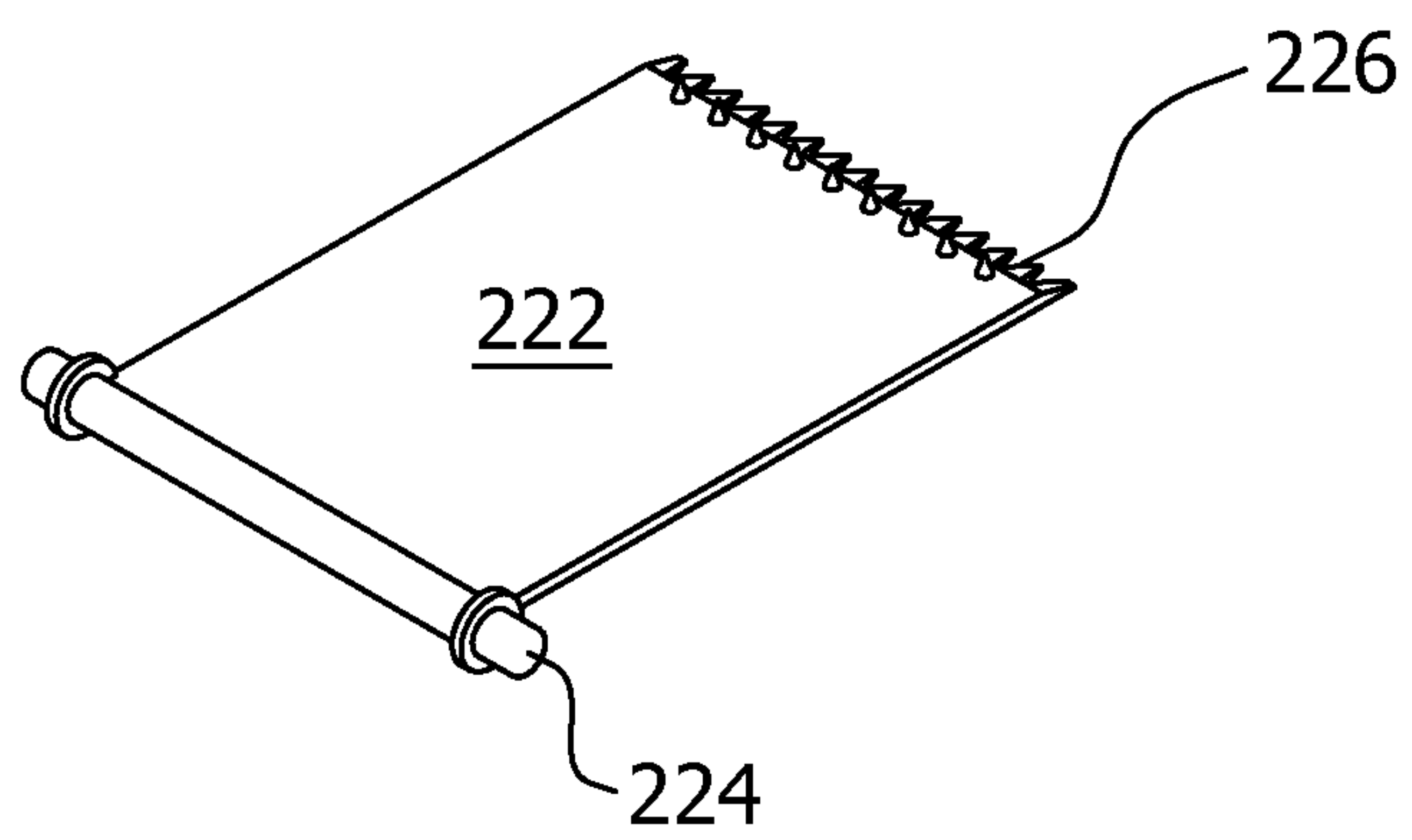
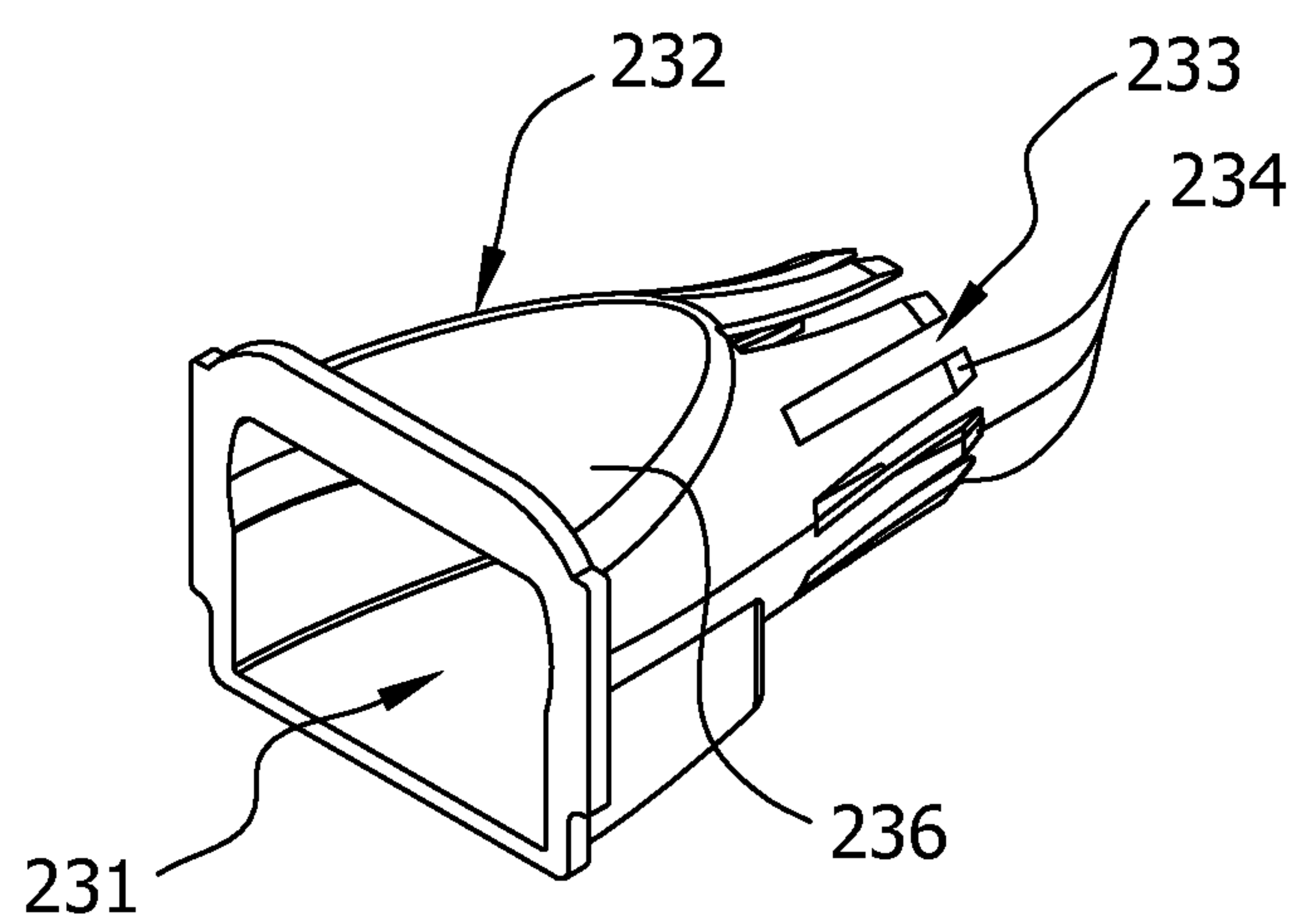


FIG. 32



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FIG. 33

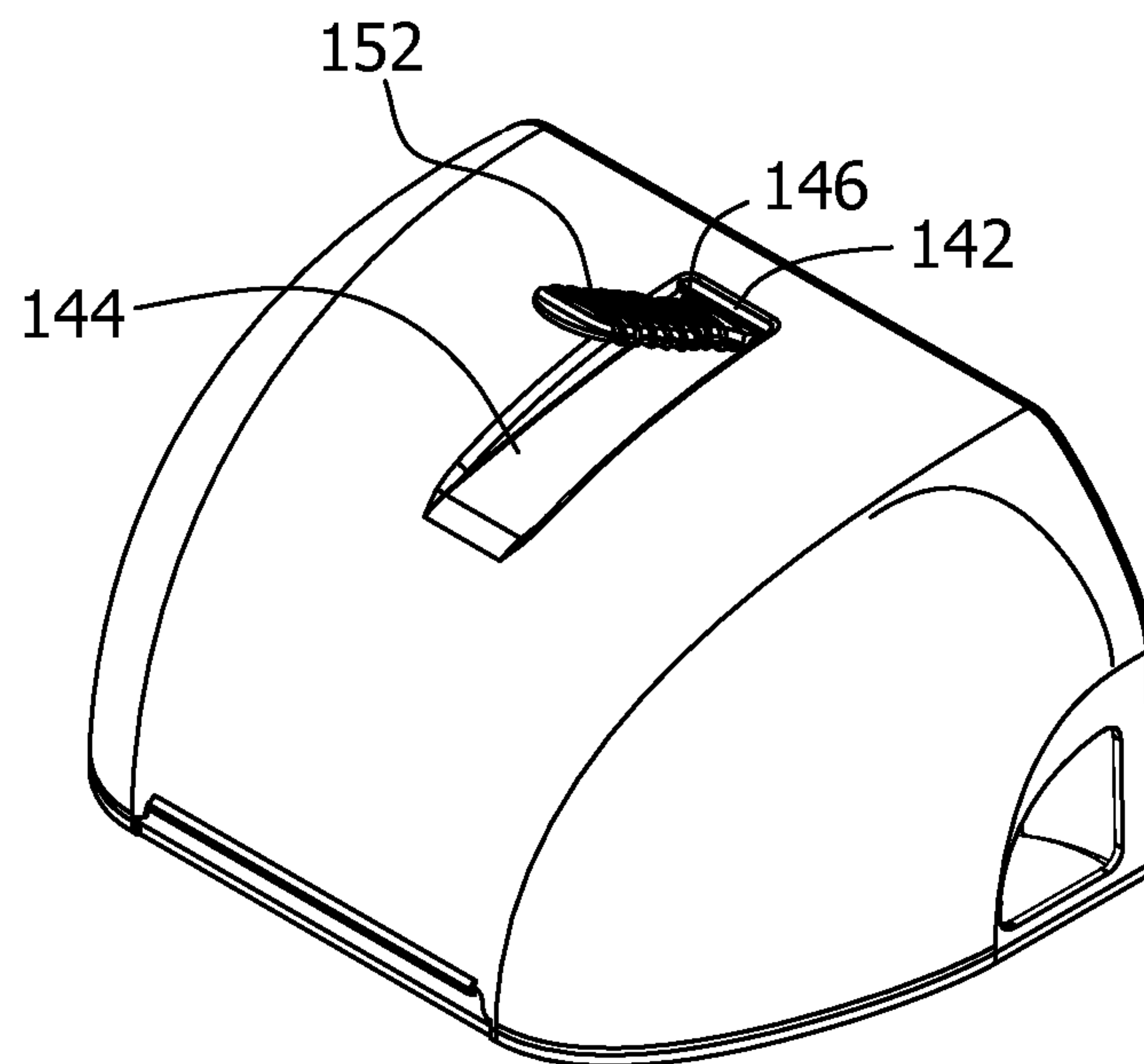
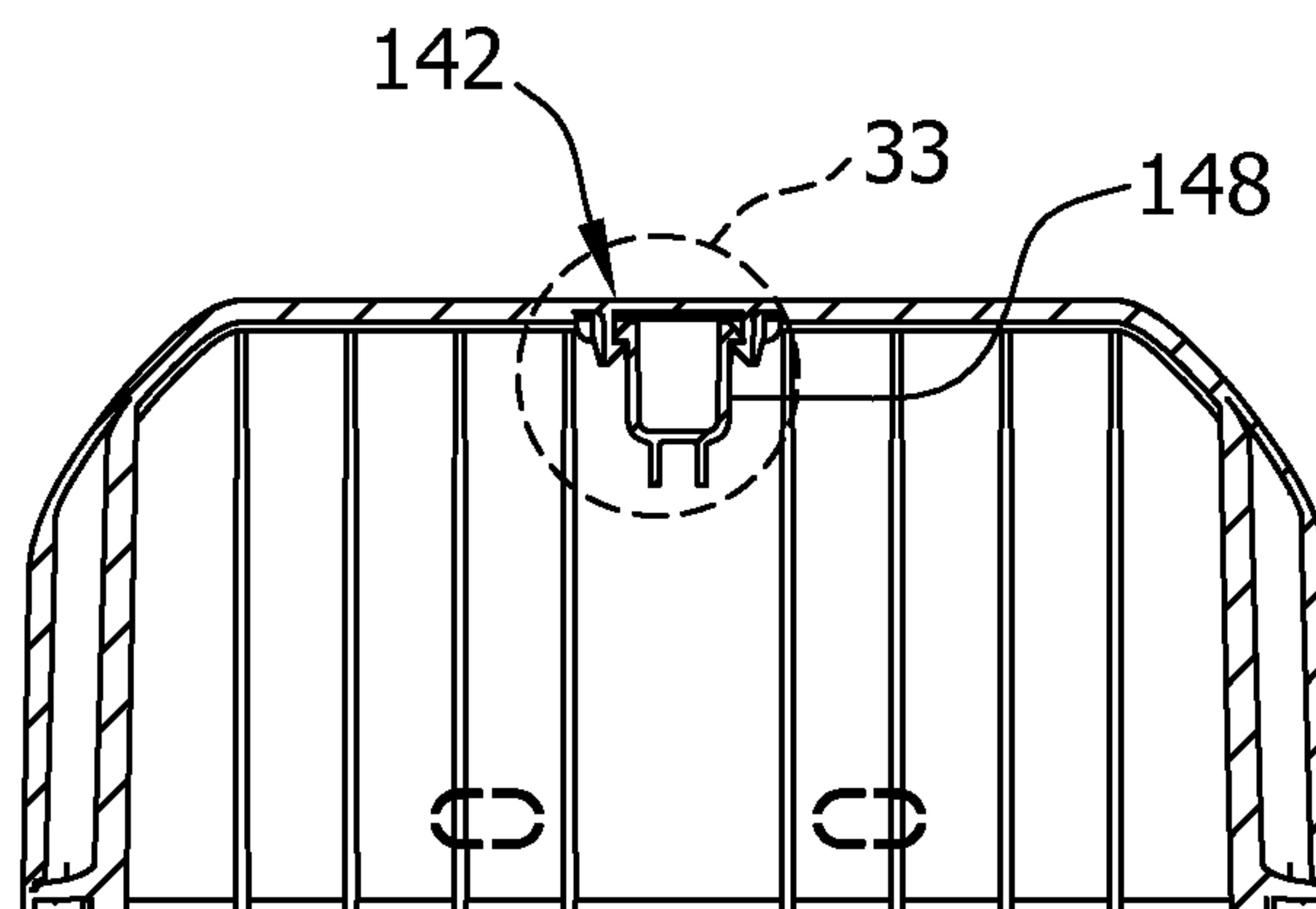


FIG. 34



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FIG. 35

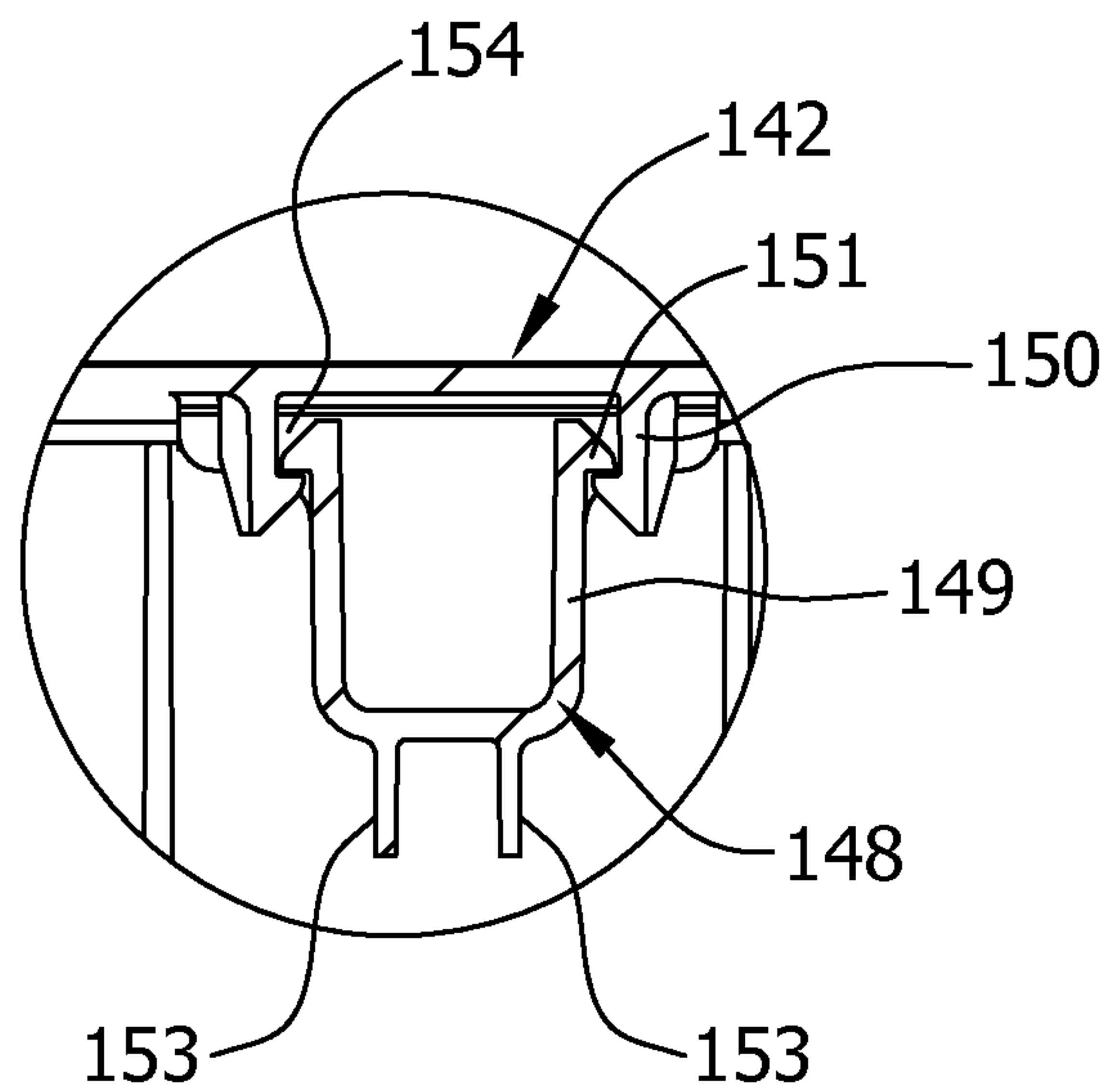
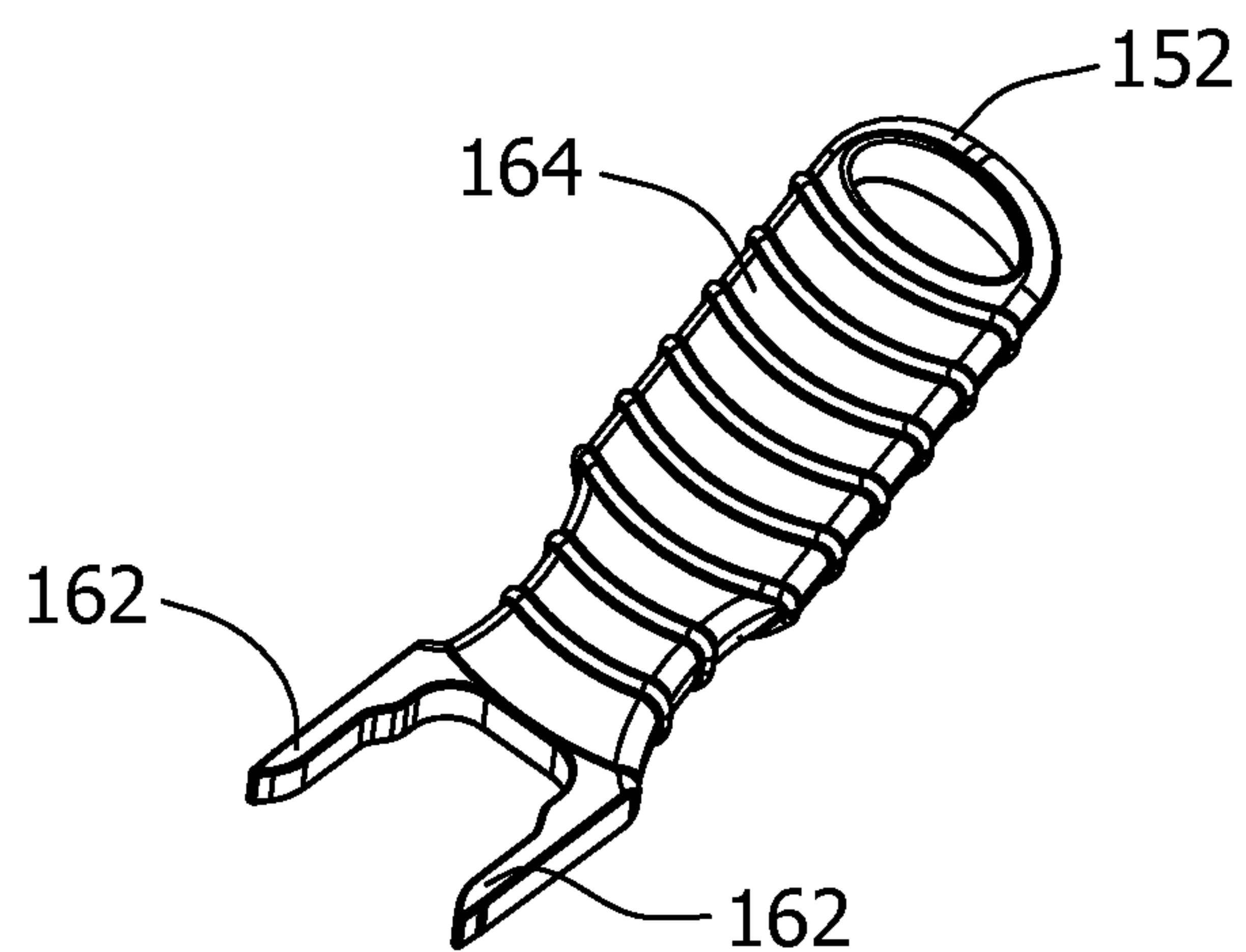
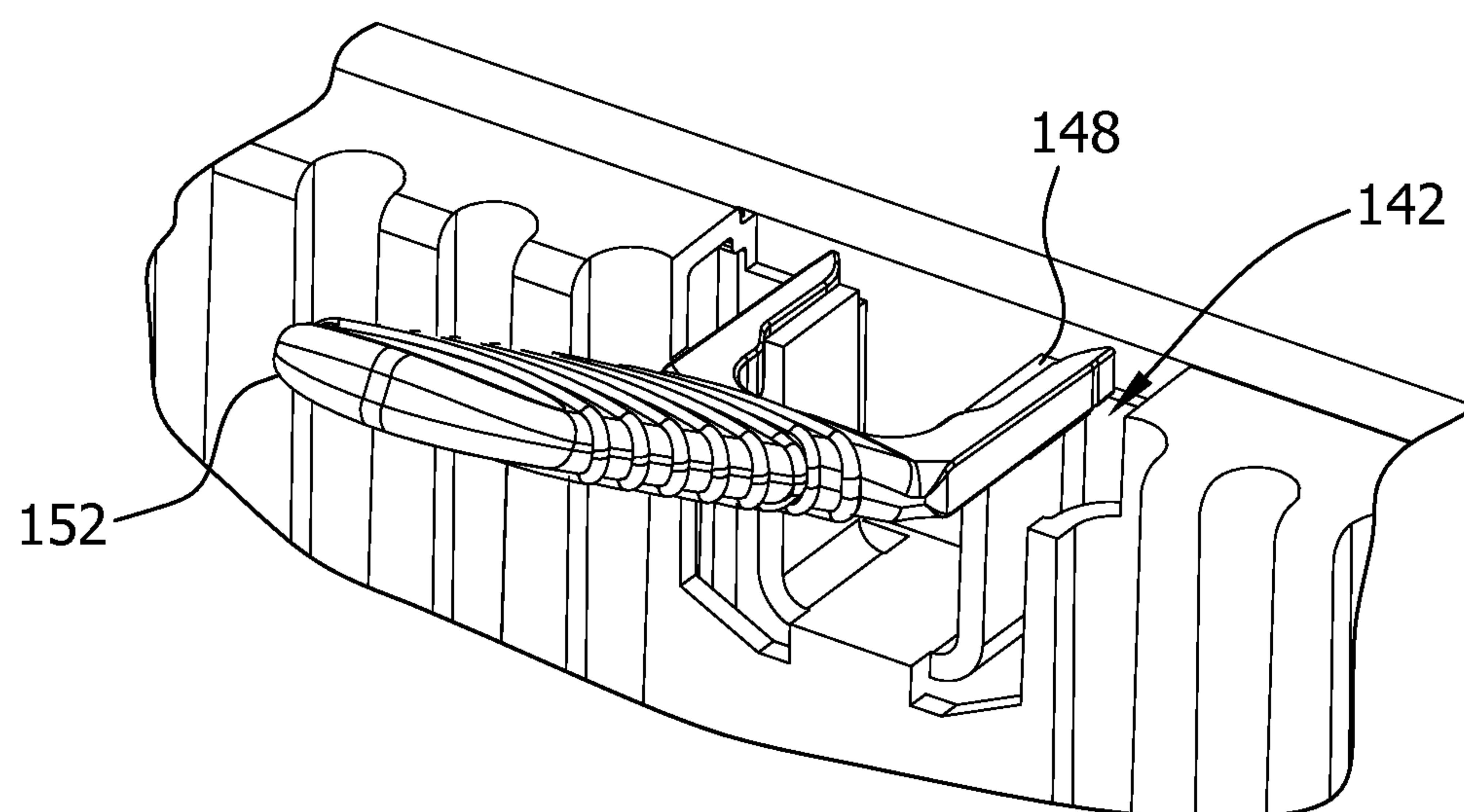


FIG. 36

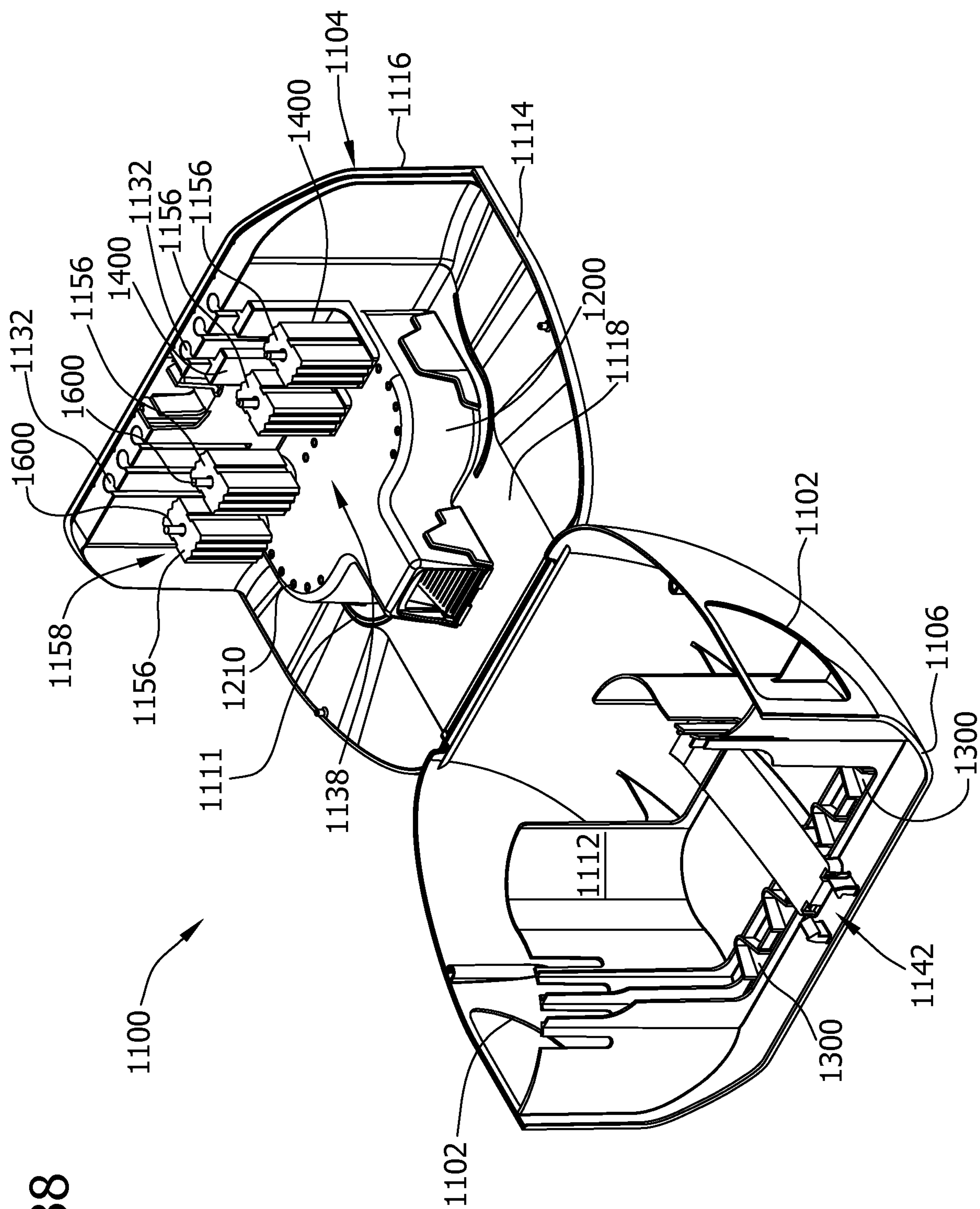


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FIG. 37

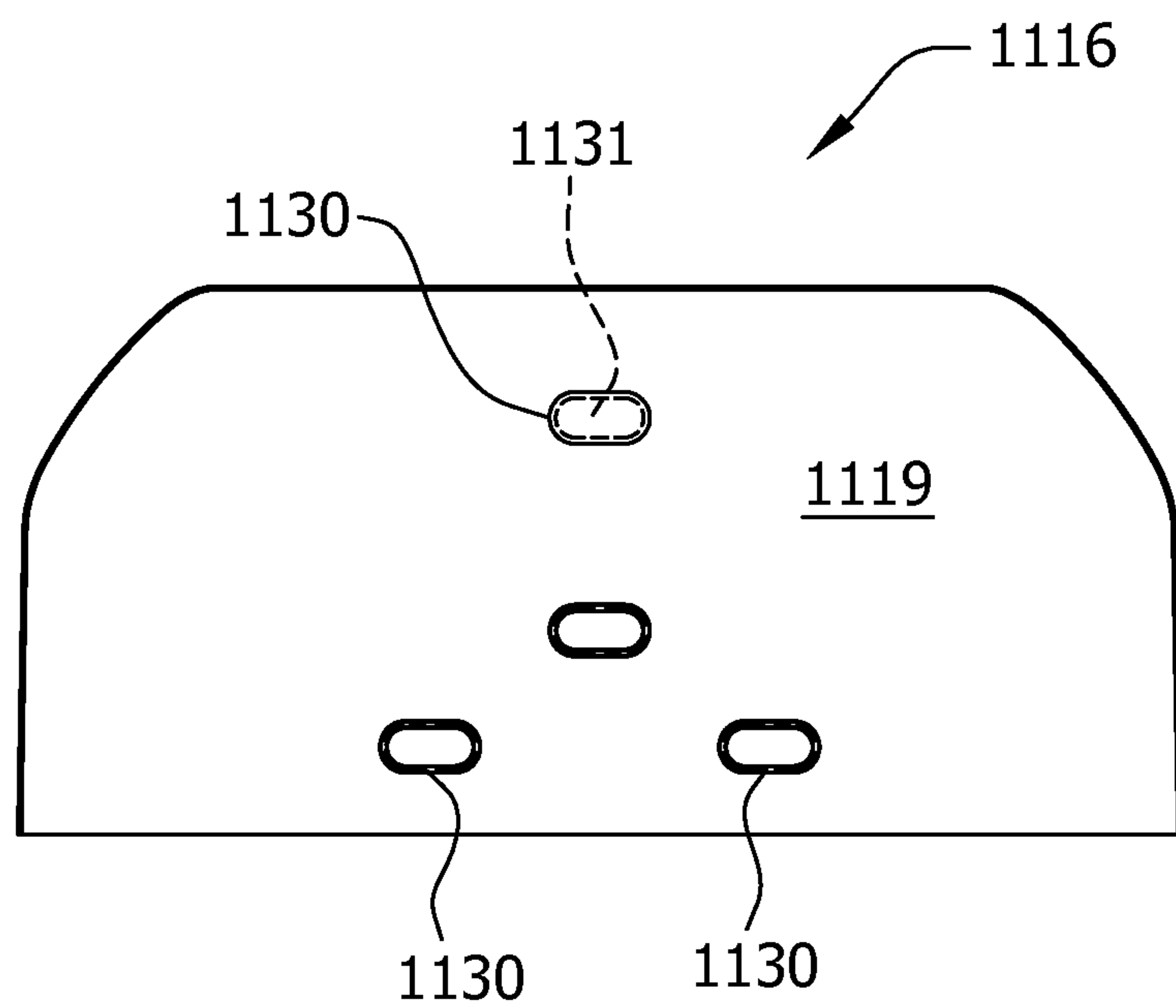


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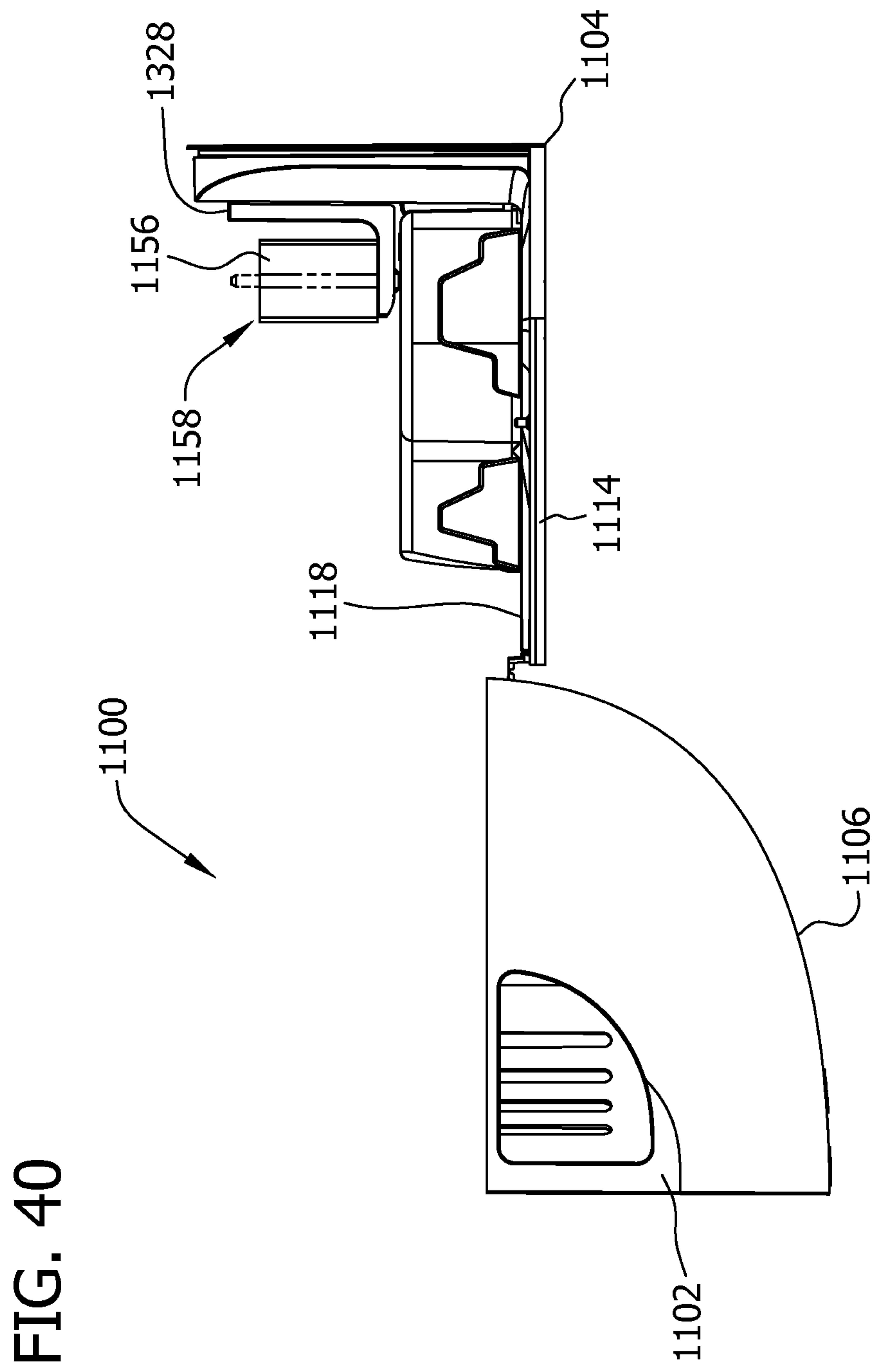


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FIG. 38A

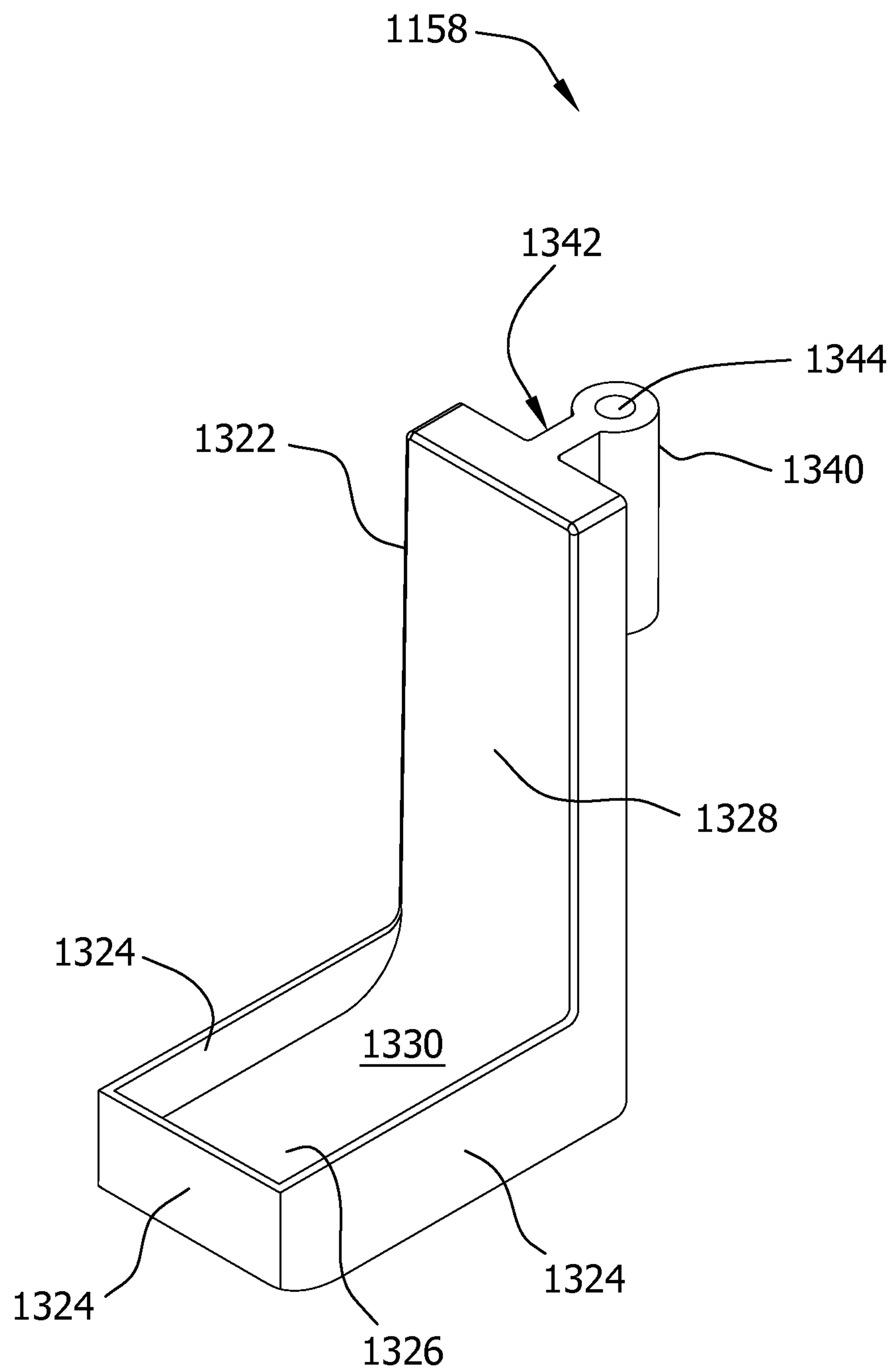


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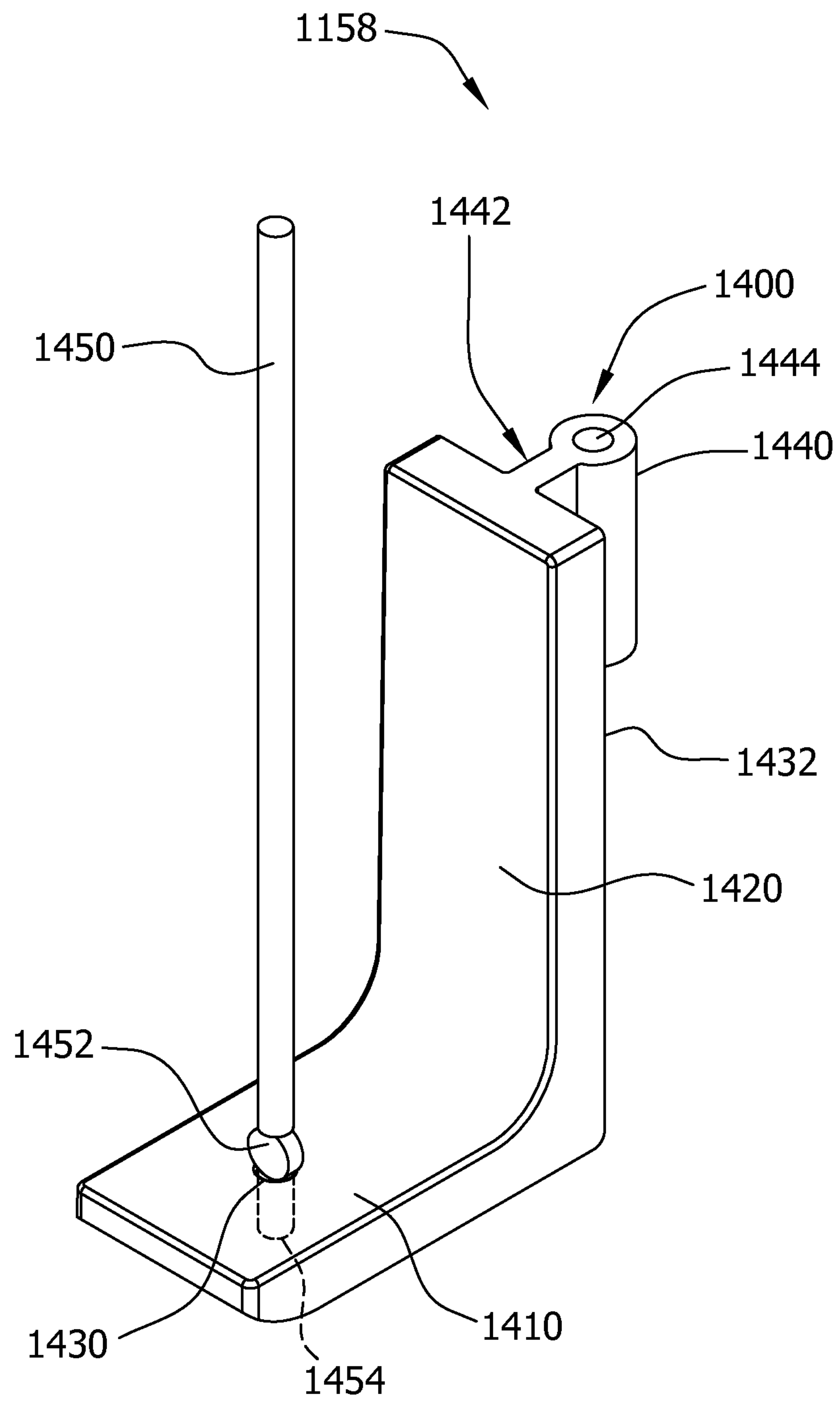
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FIG. 43

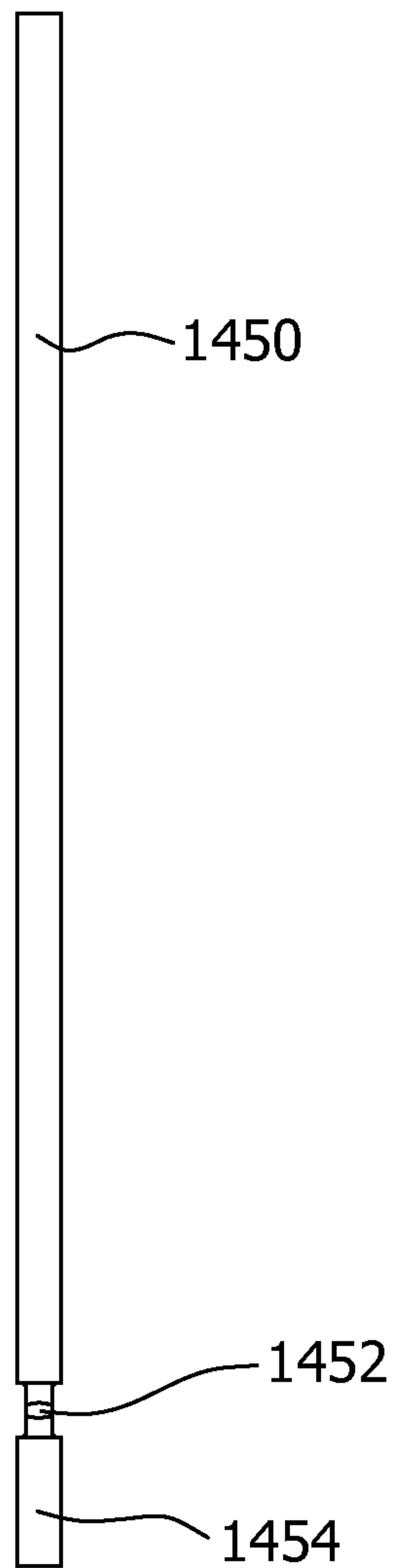
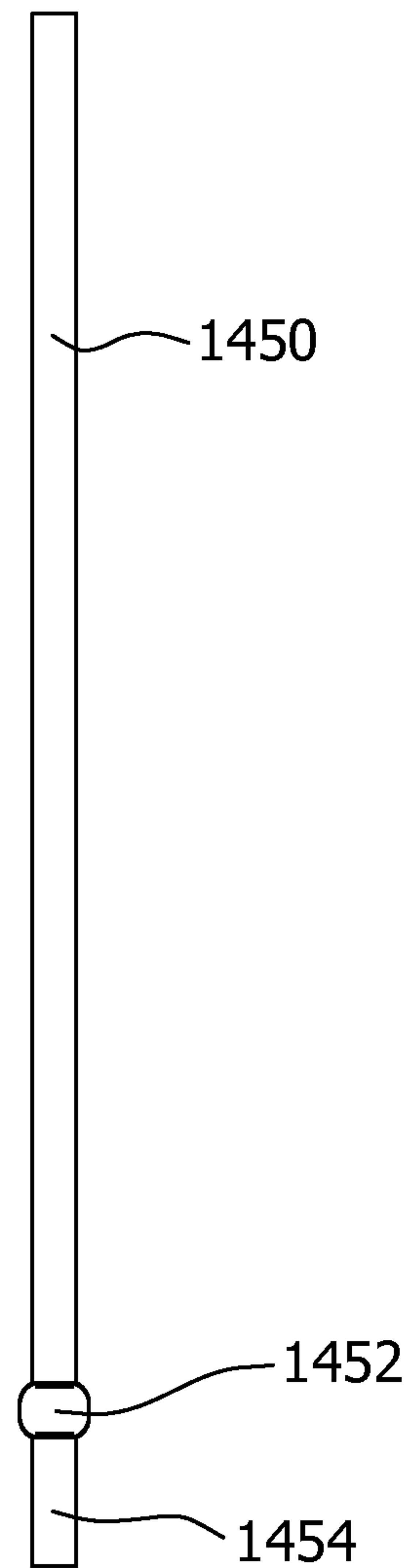
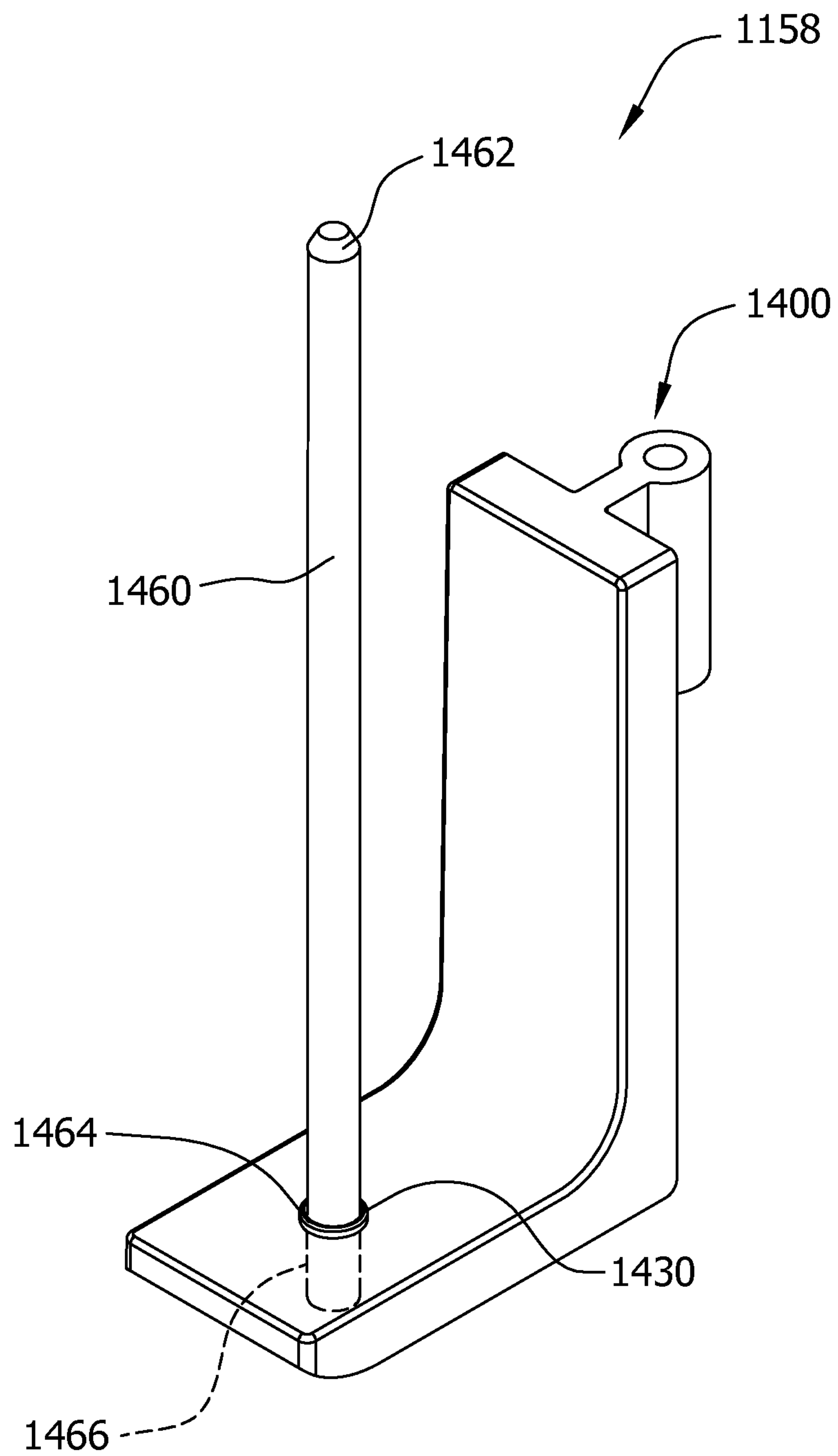


FIG. 44



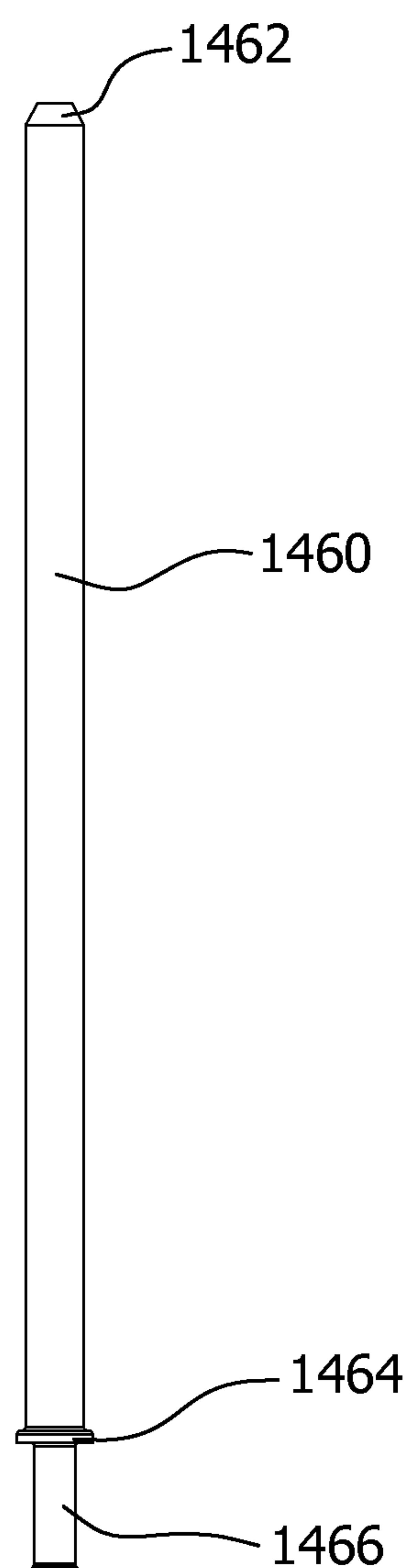
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FIG. 45



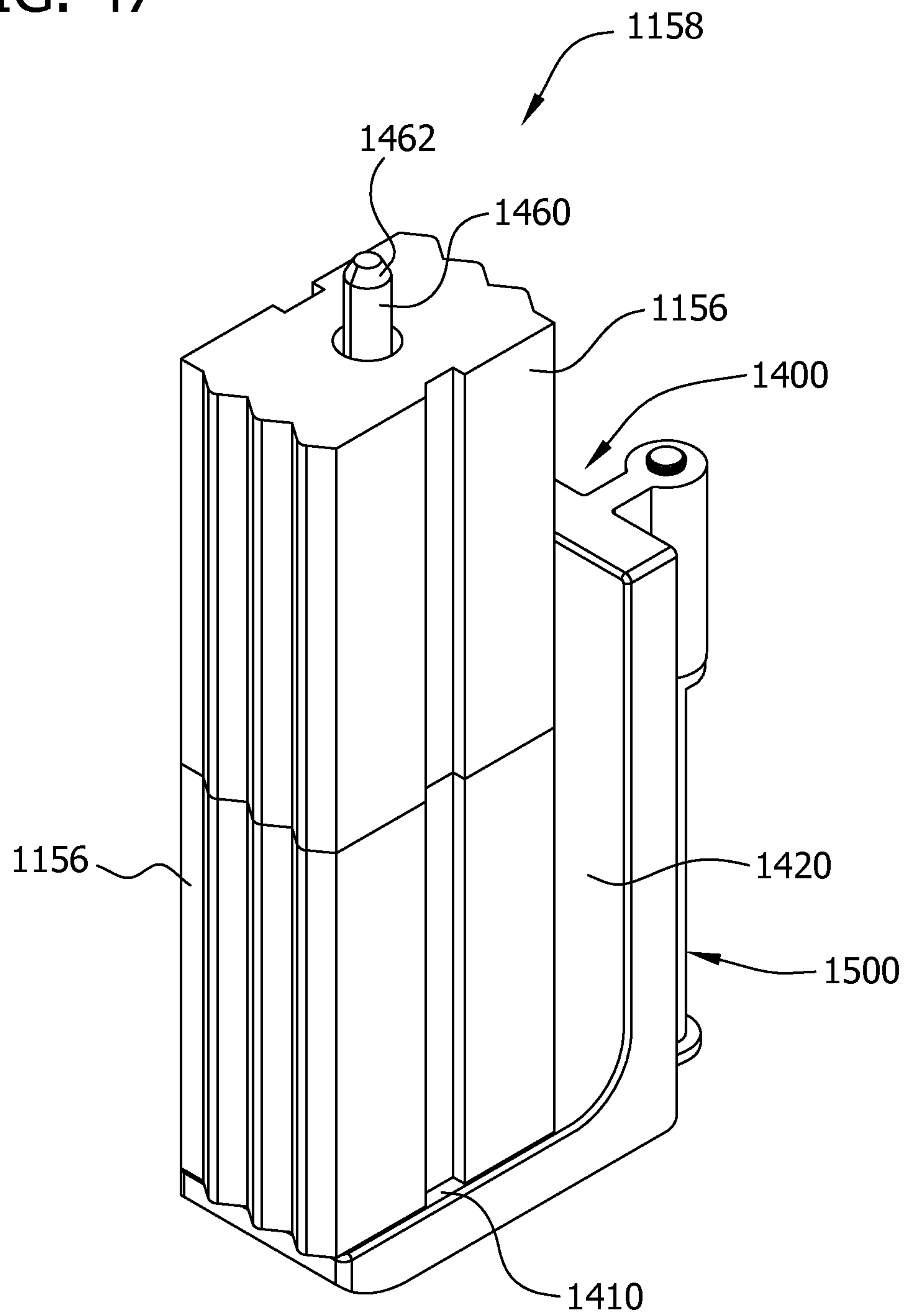
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FIG. 46



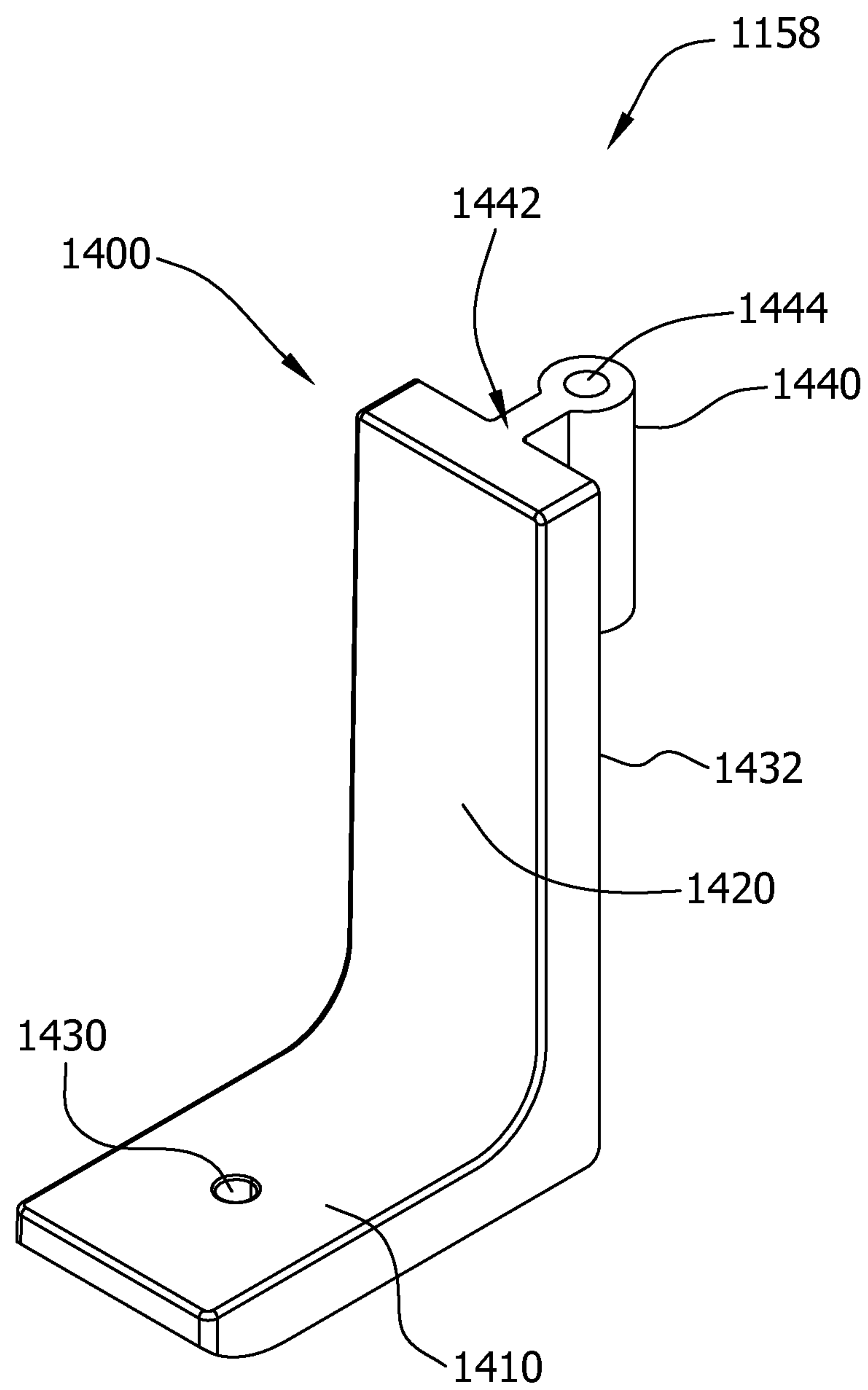
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FIG. 47



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FIG. 49

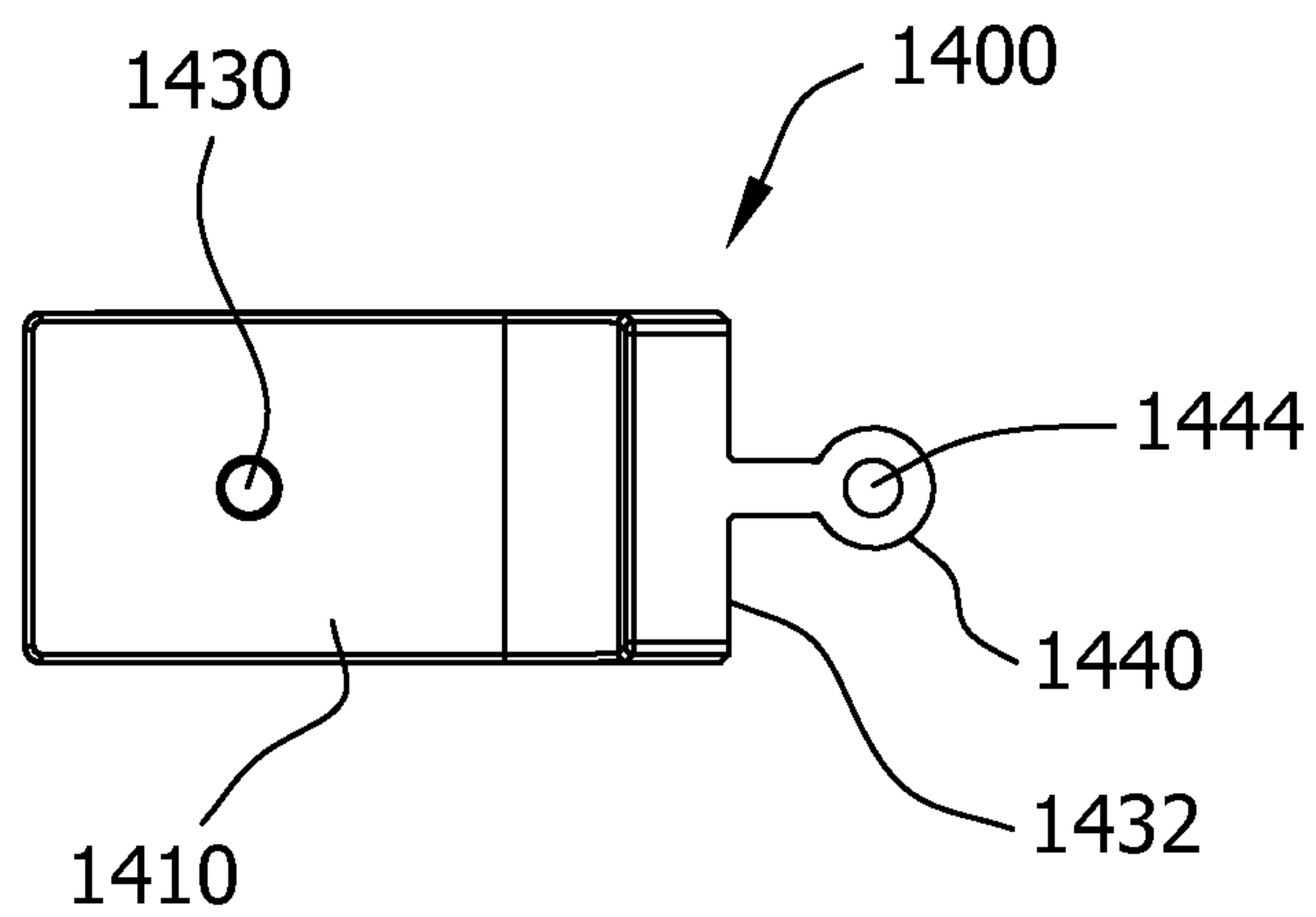
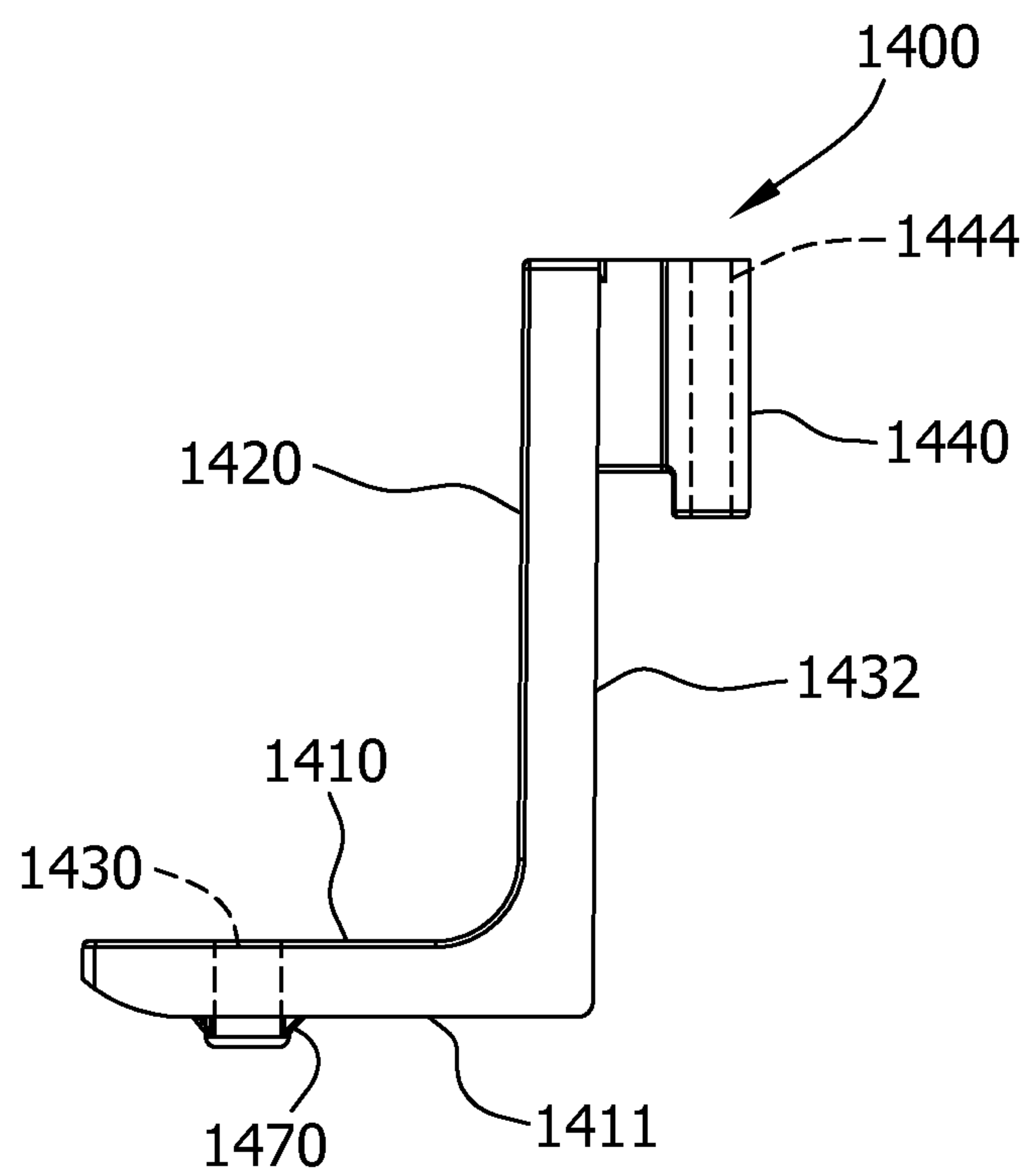
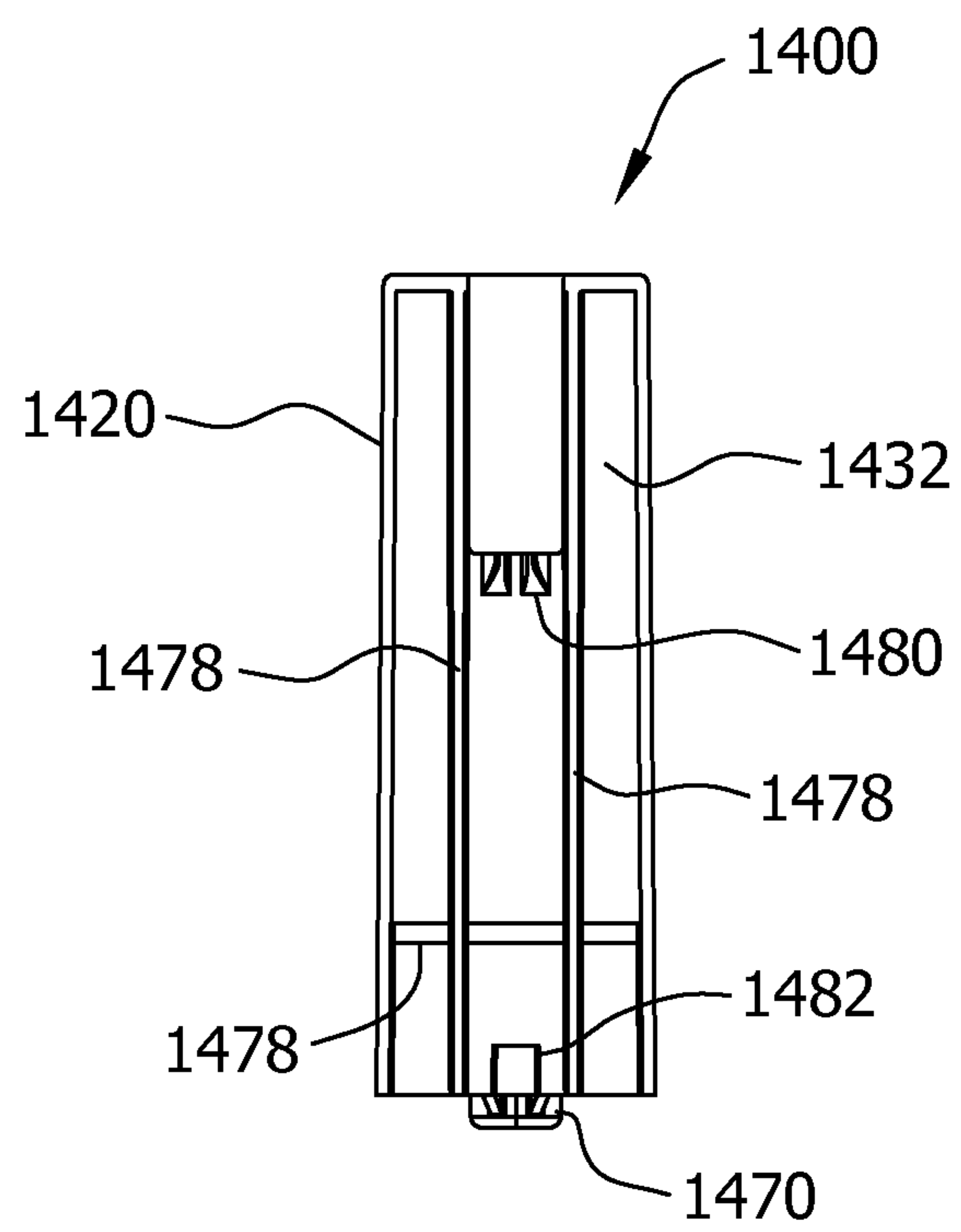


FIG. 50



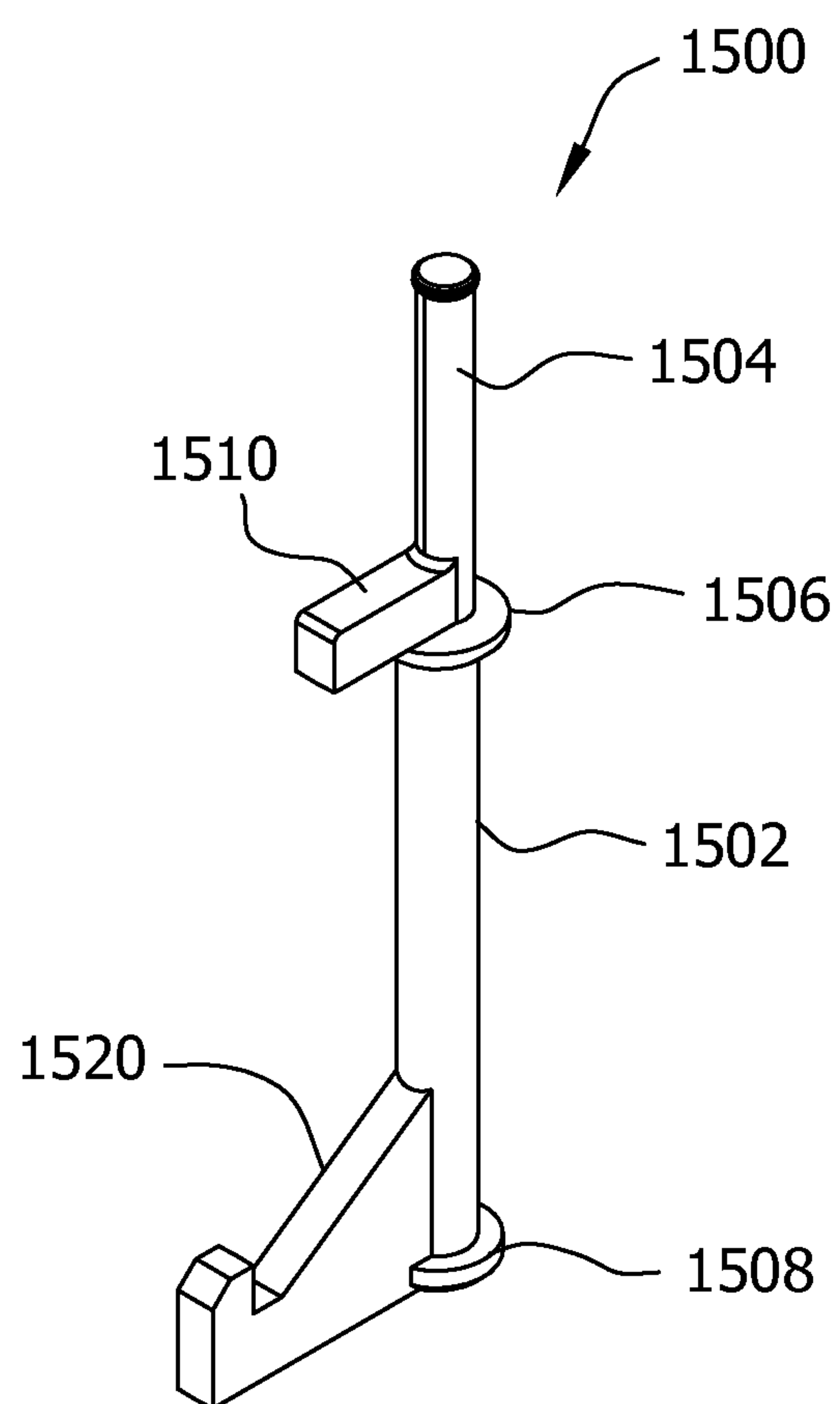
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FIG. 51



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FIG. 52



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FIG. 53

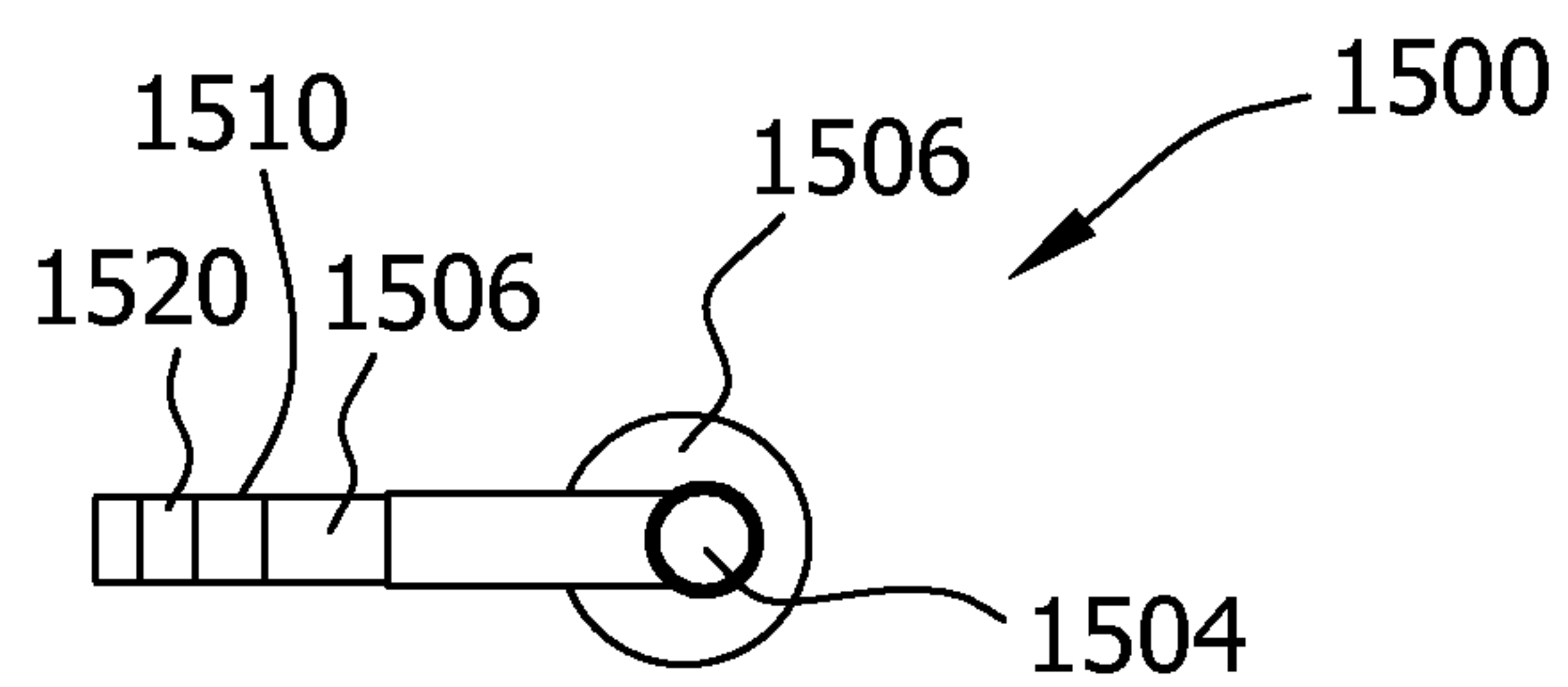
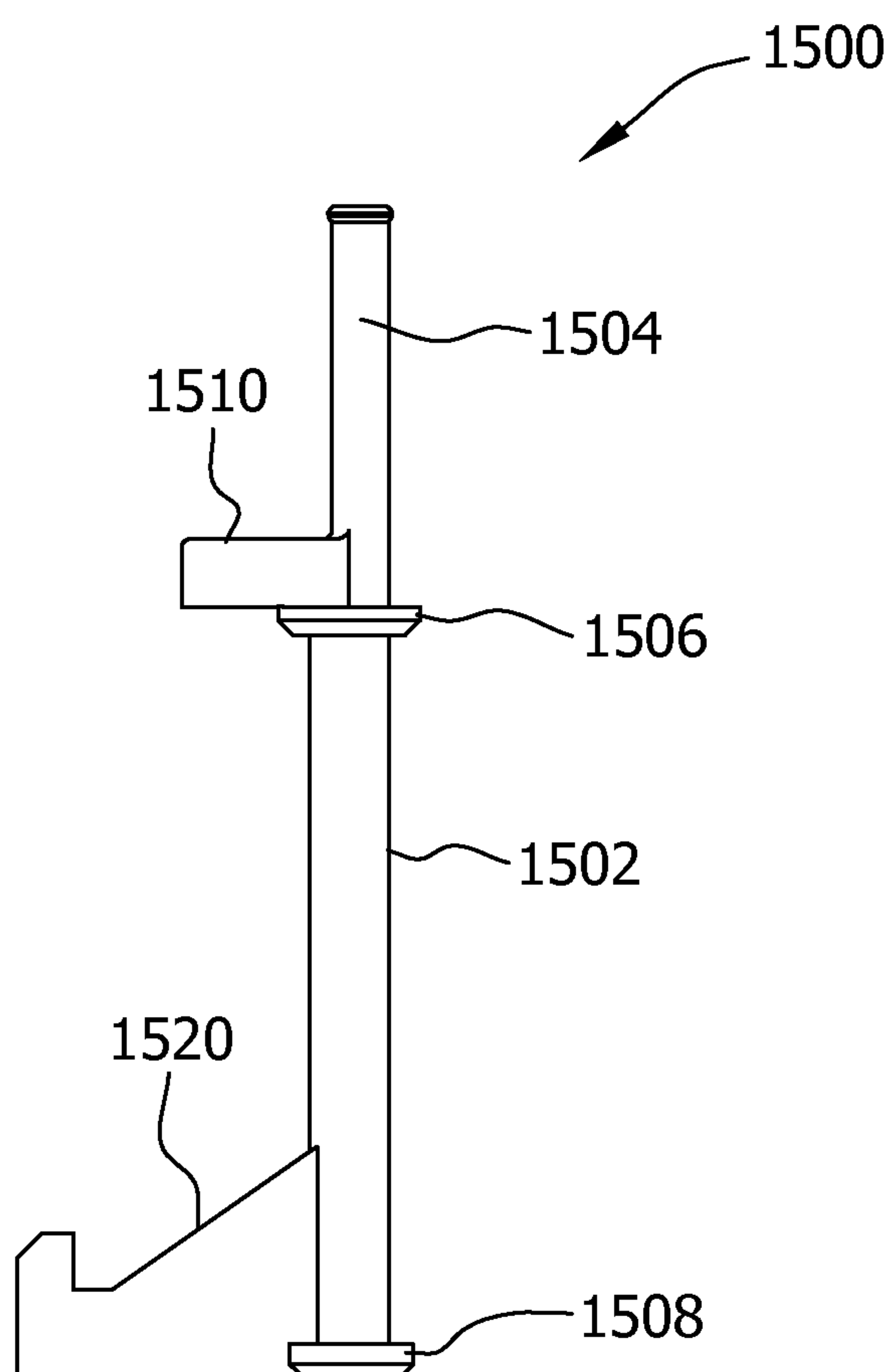
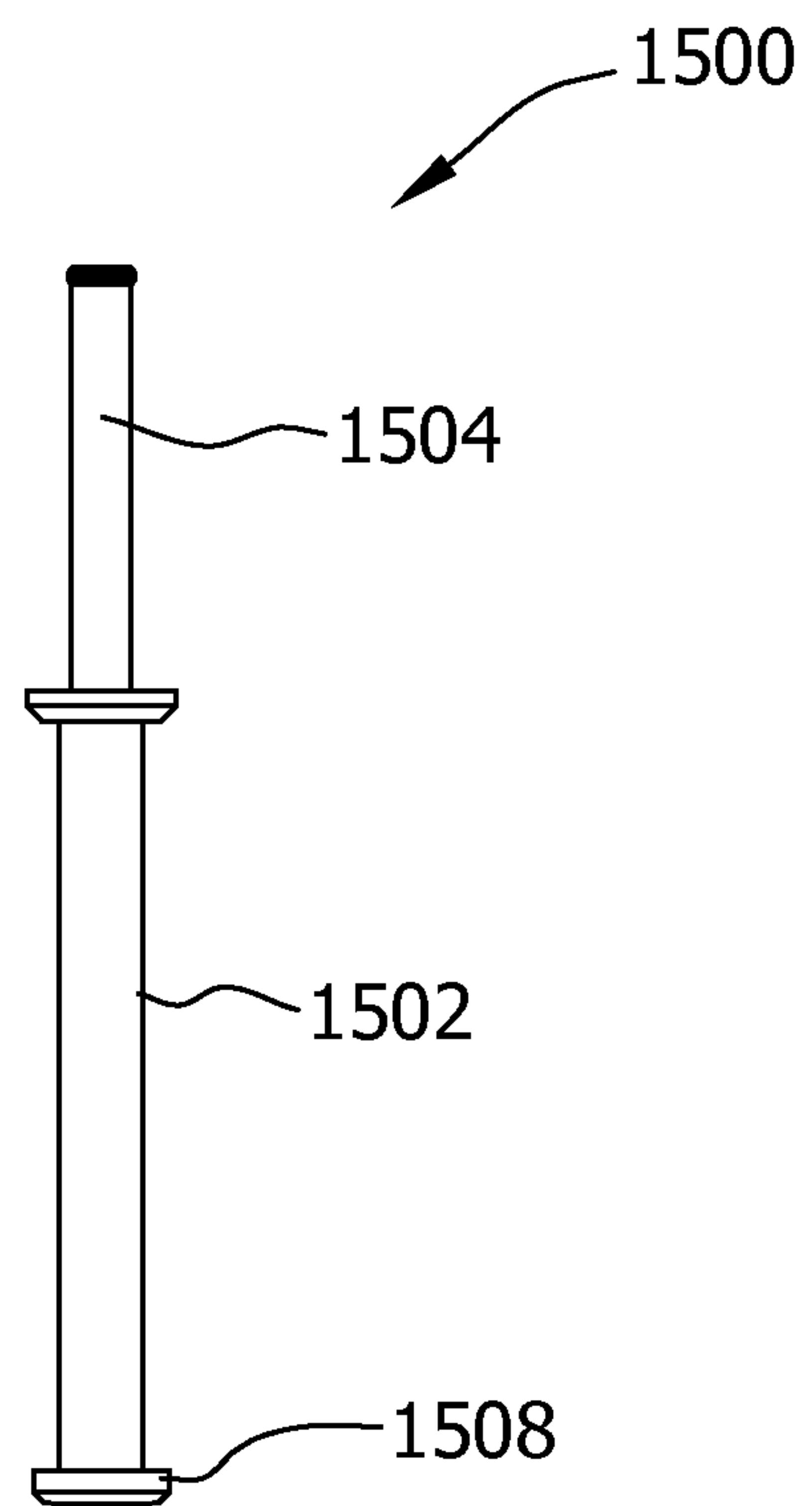


FIG. 54



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FIG. 55



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FIG. 56

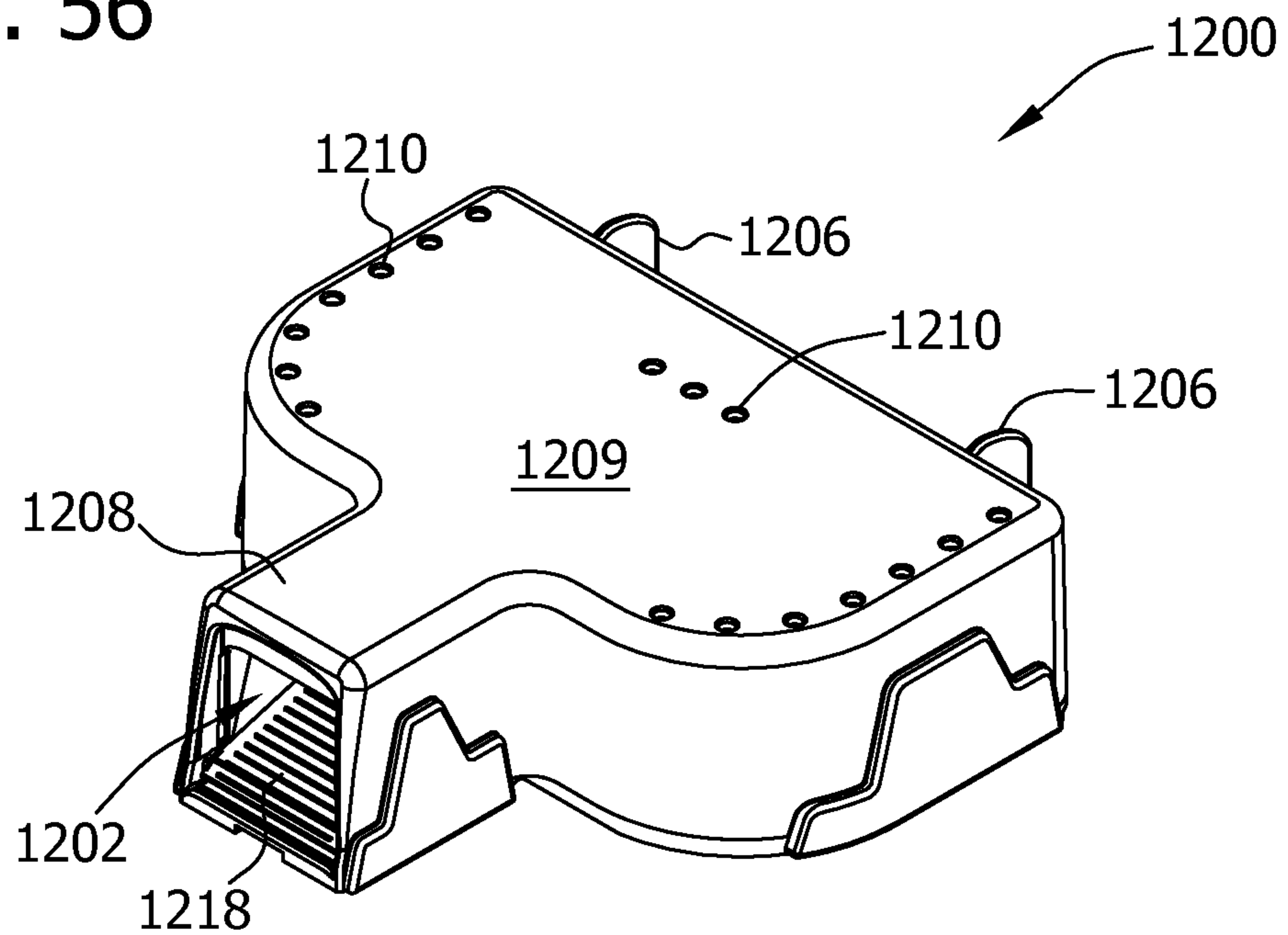
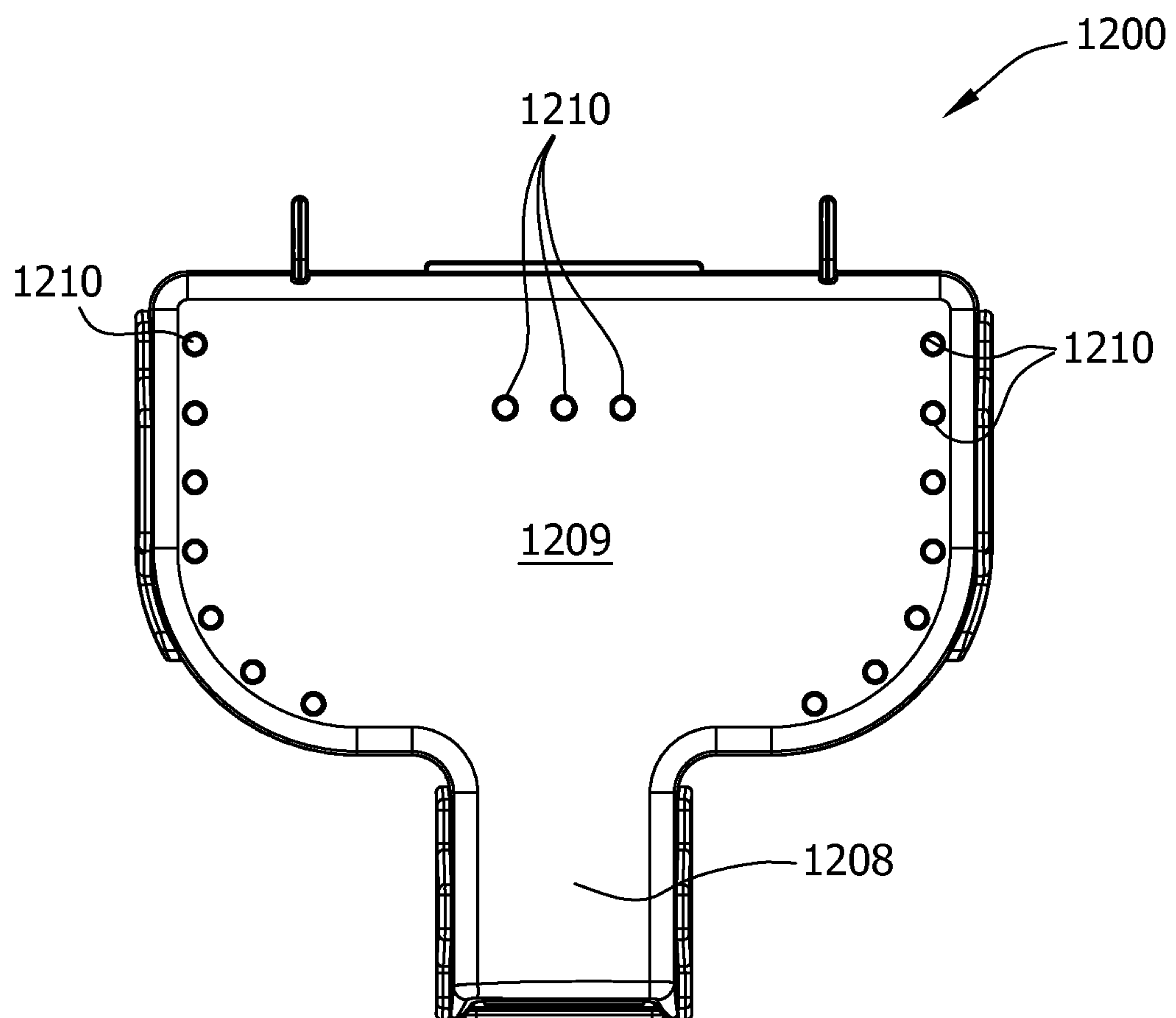


FIG. 57



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FIG. 58

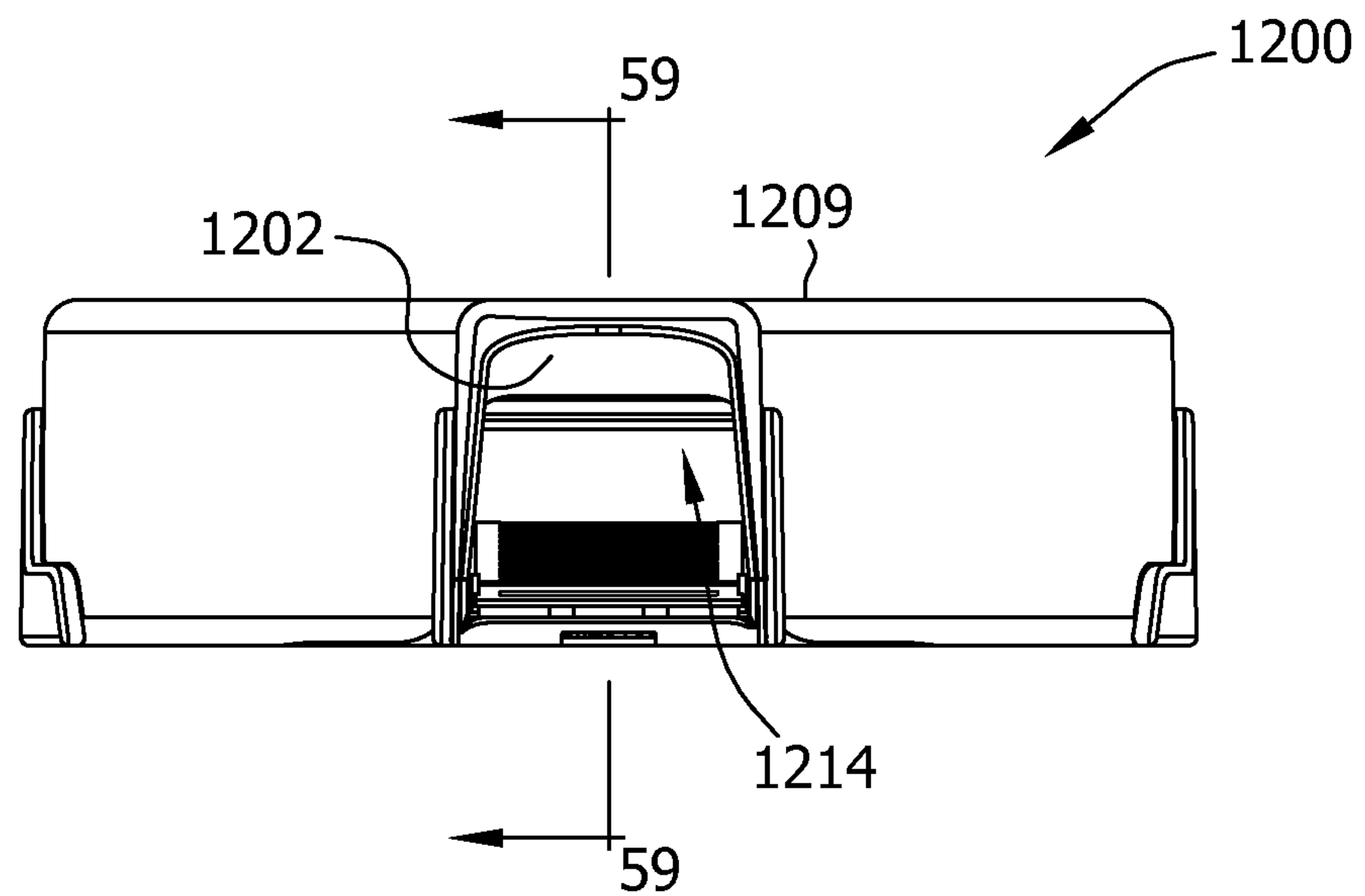
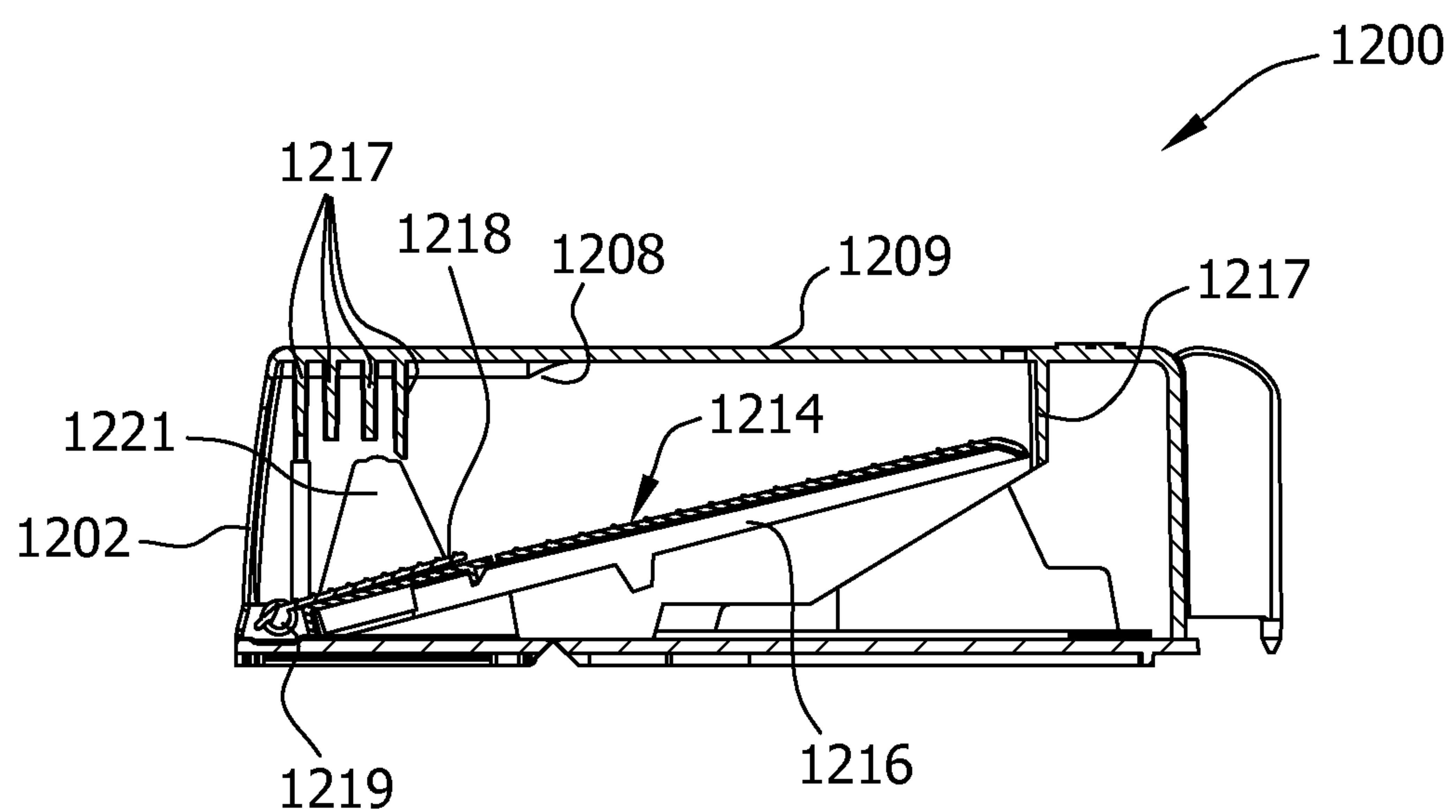
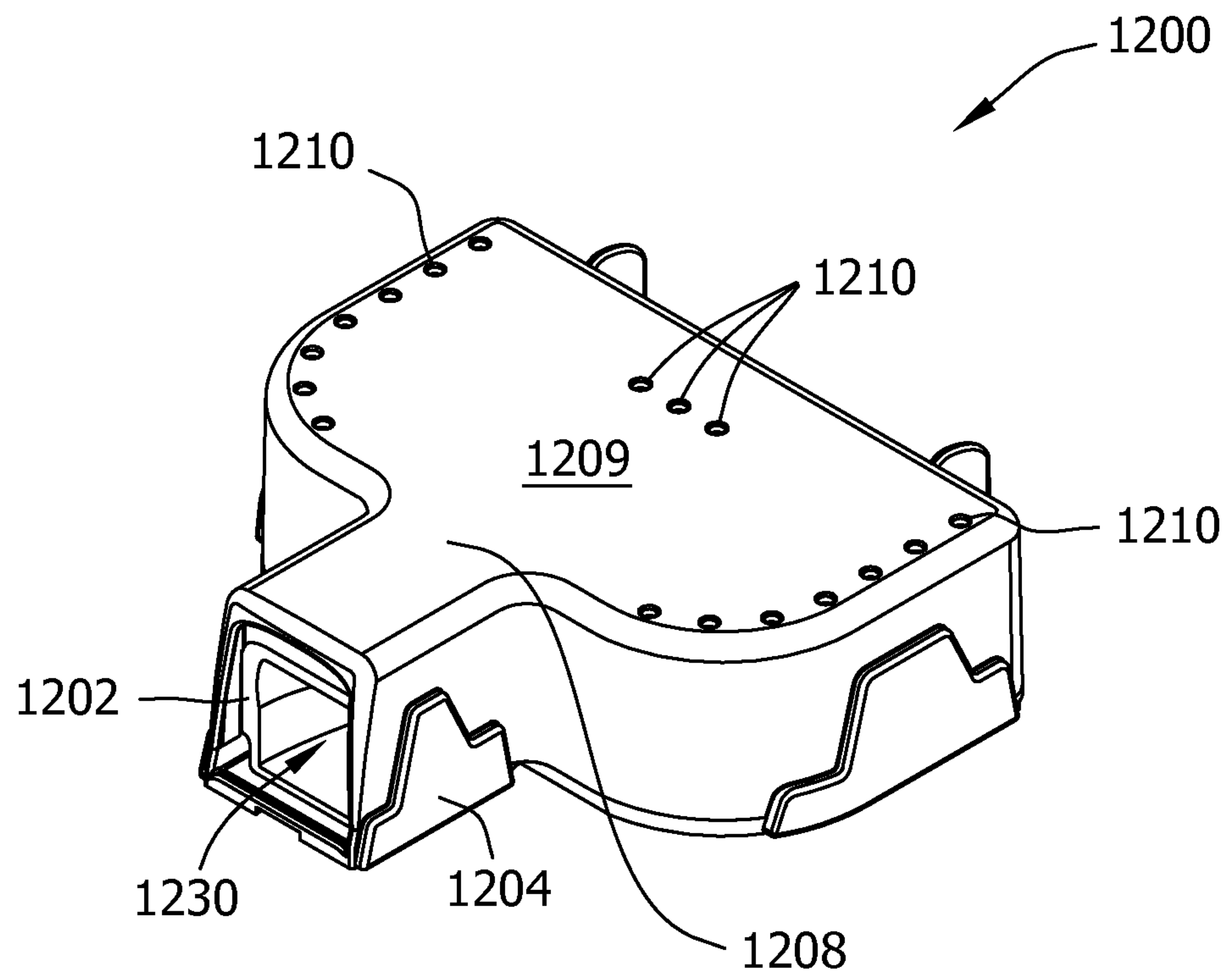


FIG. 59



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FIG. 60



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FIG. 61

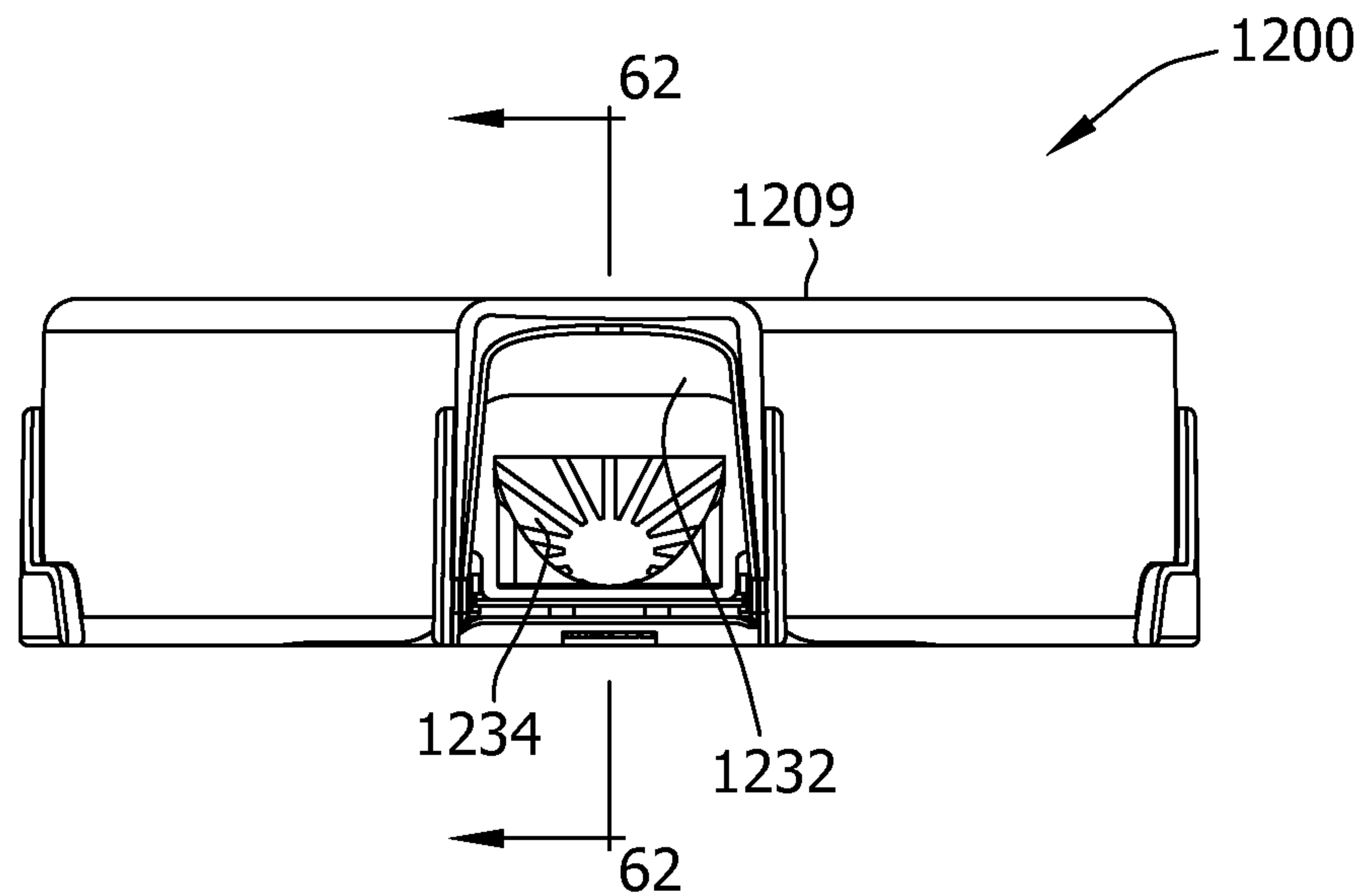
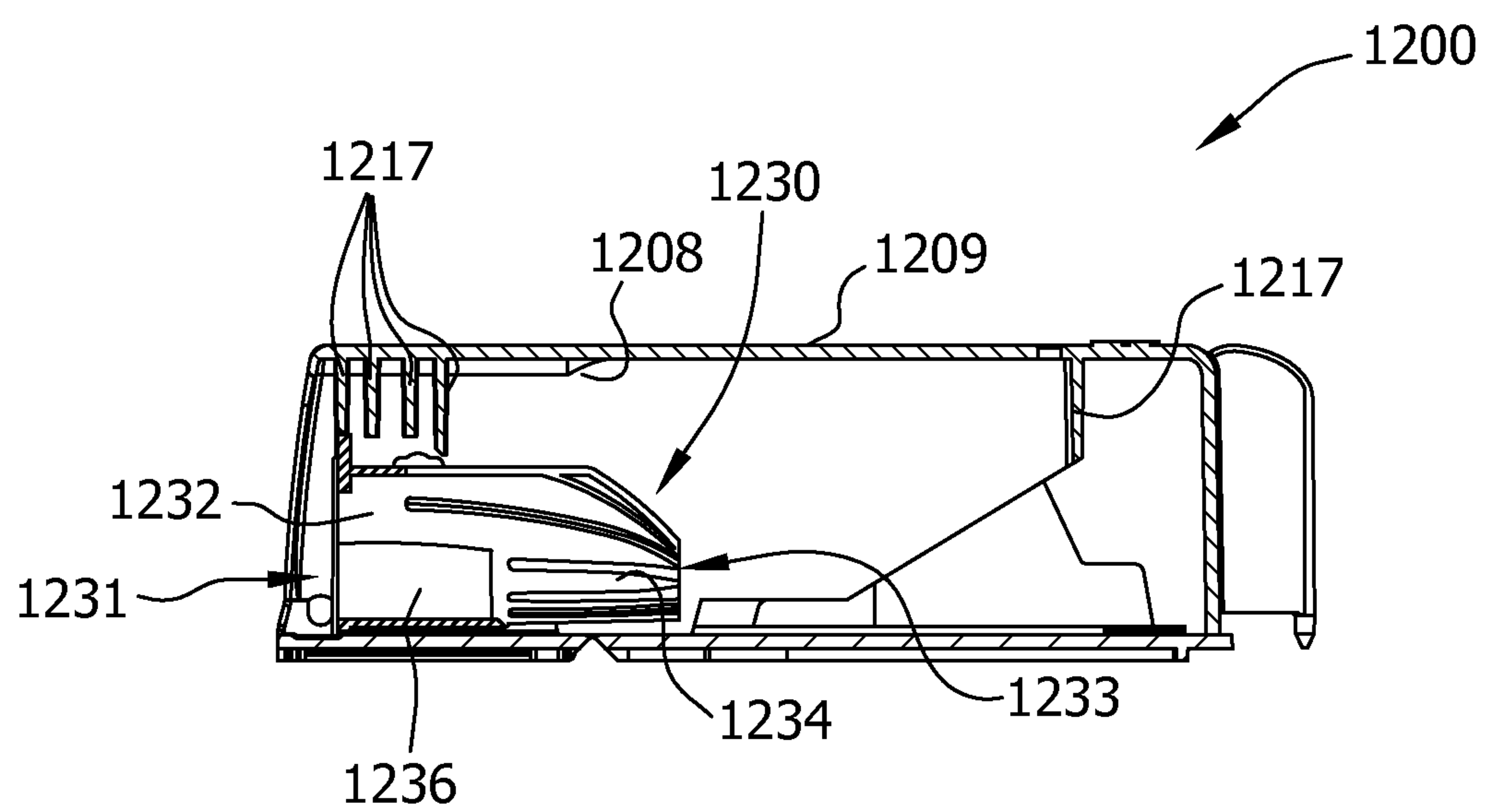
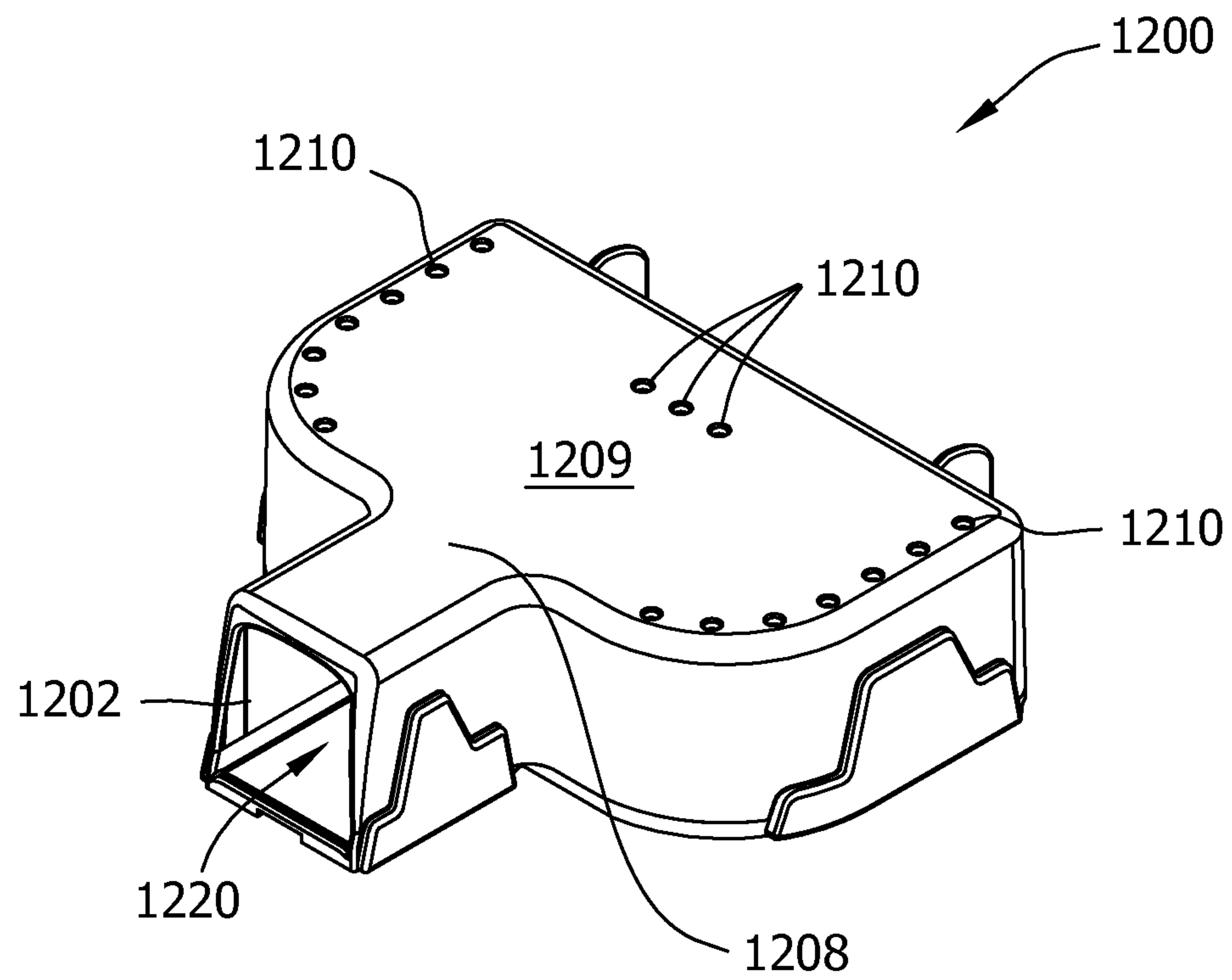


FIG. 62



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FIG. 63



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FIG. 64

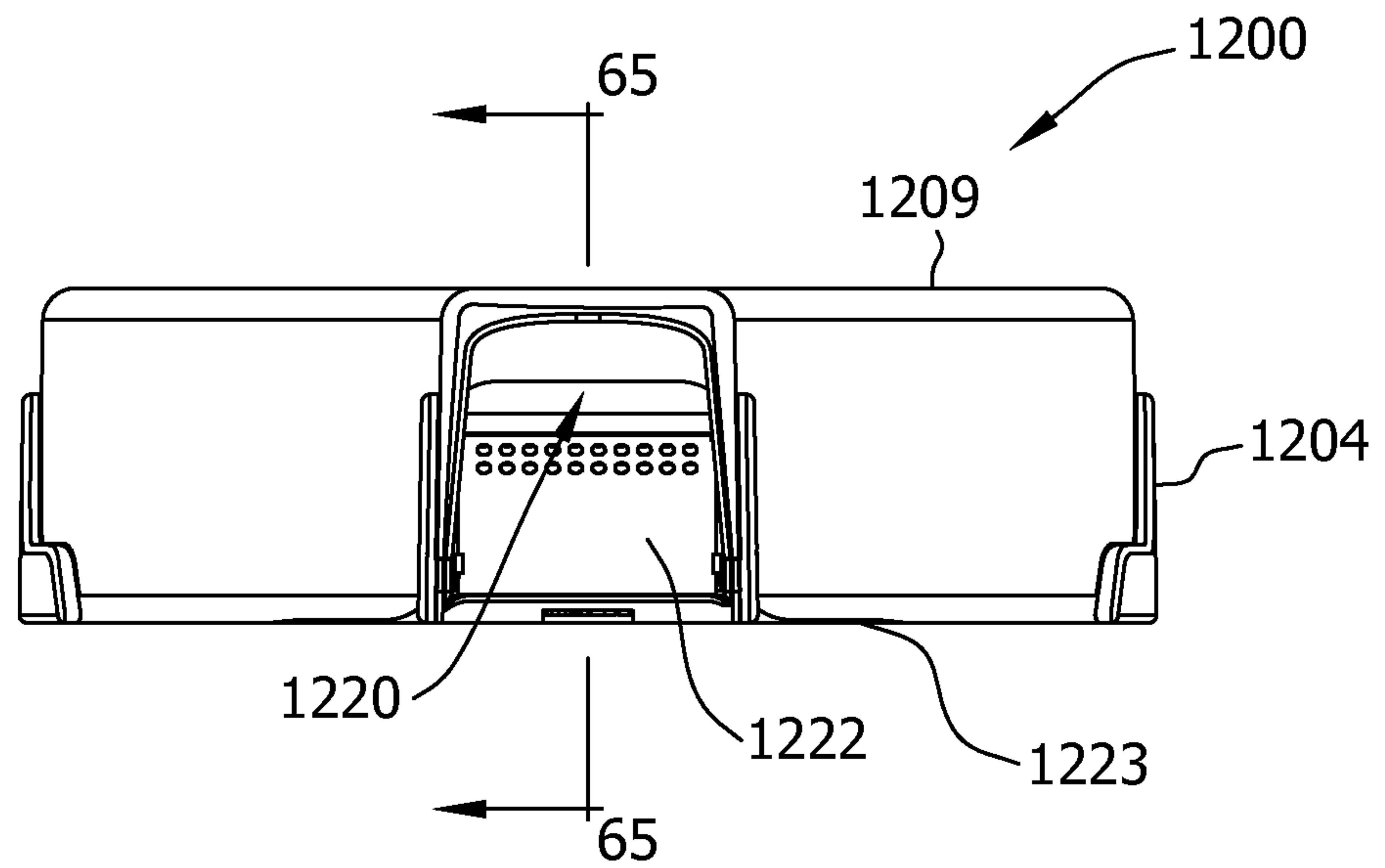
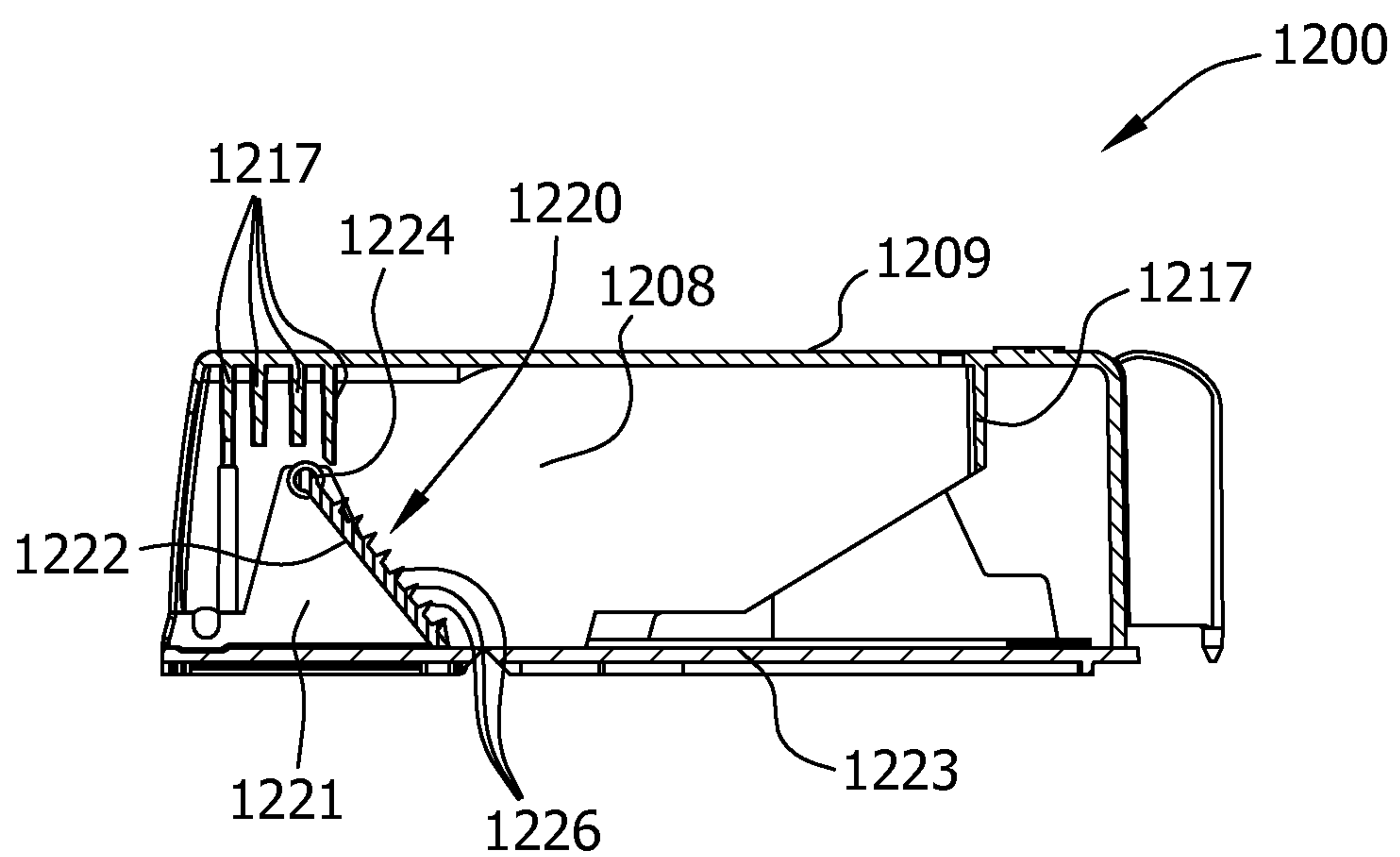
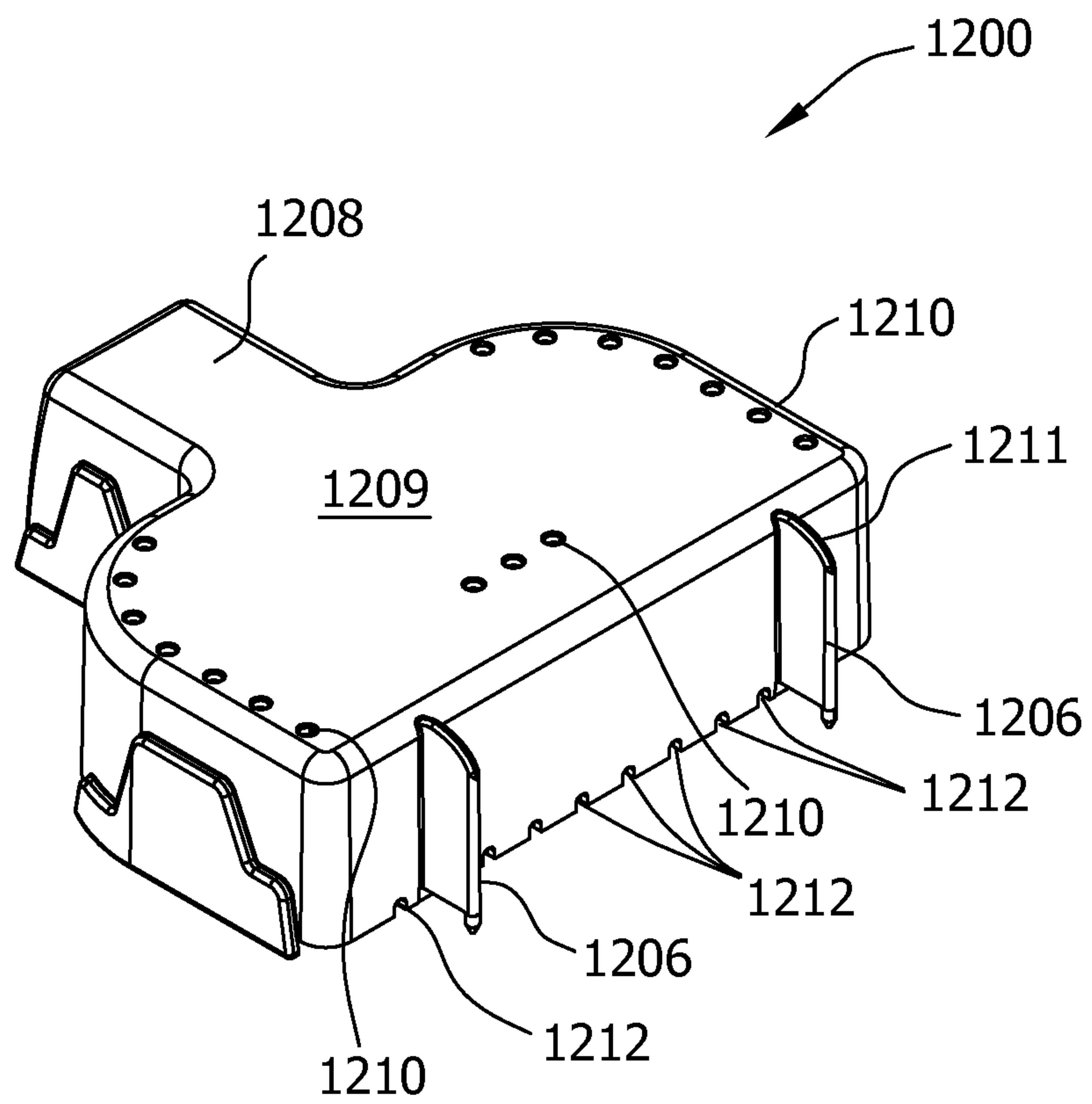


FIG. 65



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FIG. 66



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FIG. 67

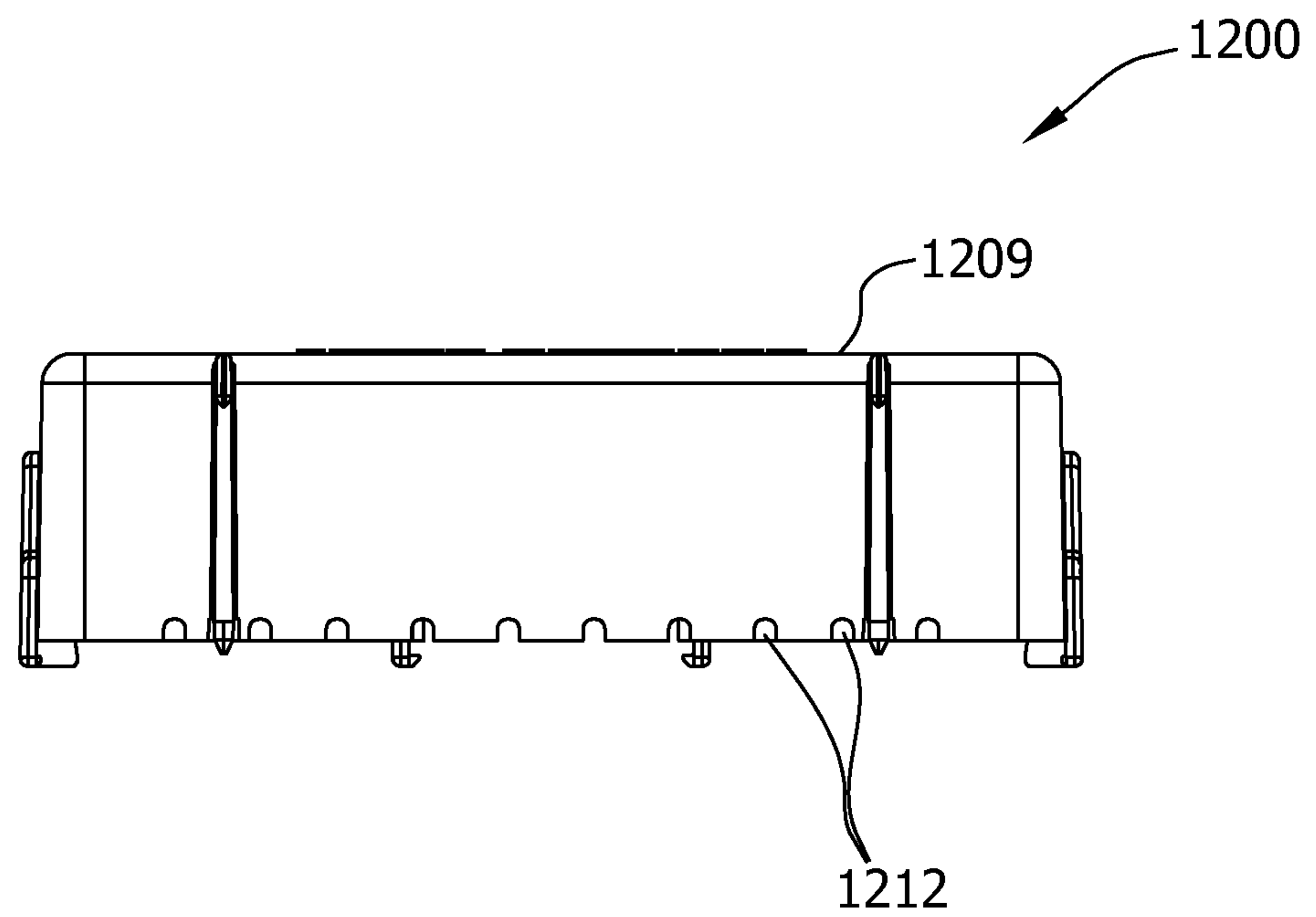
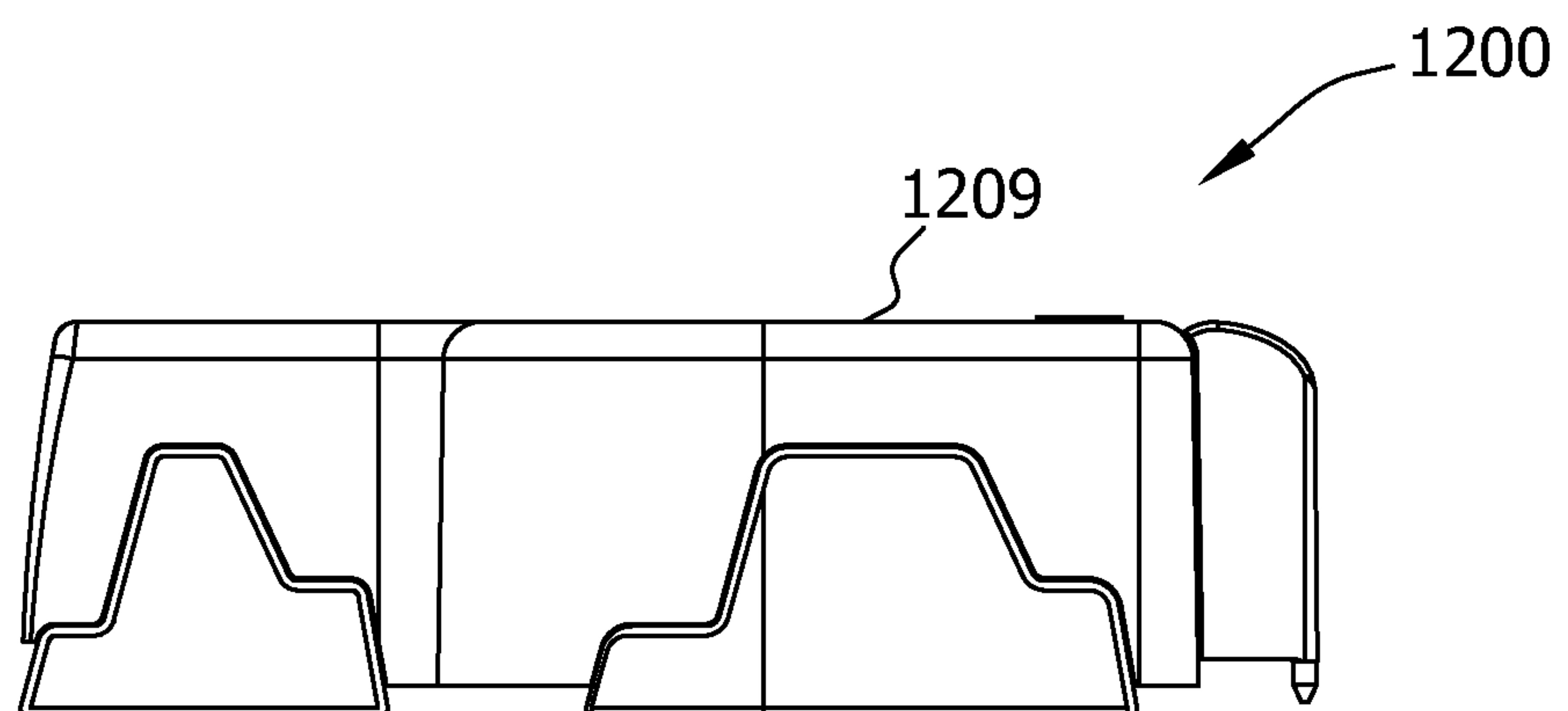
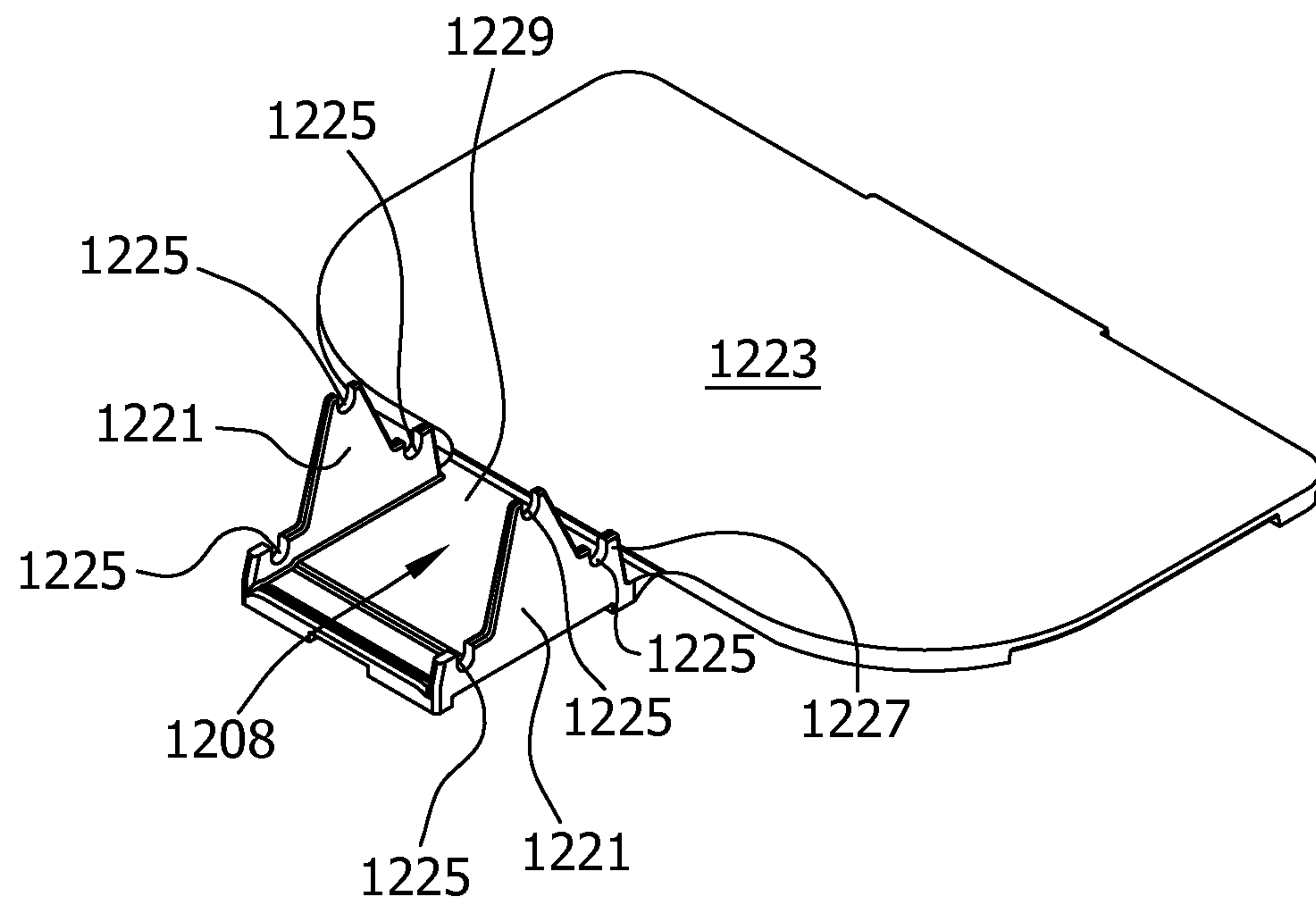


FIG. 68



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FIG. 69



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FIG. 70

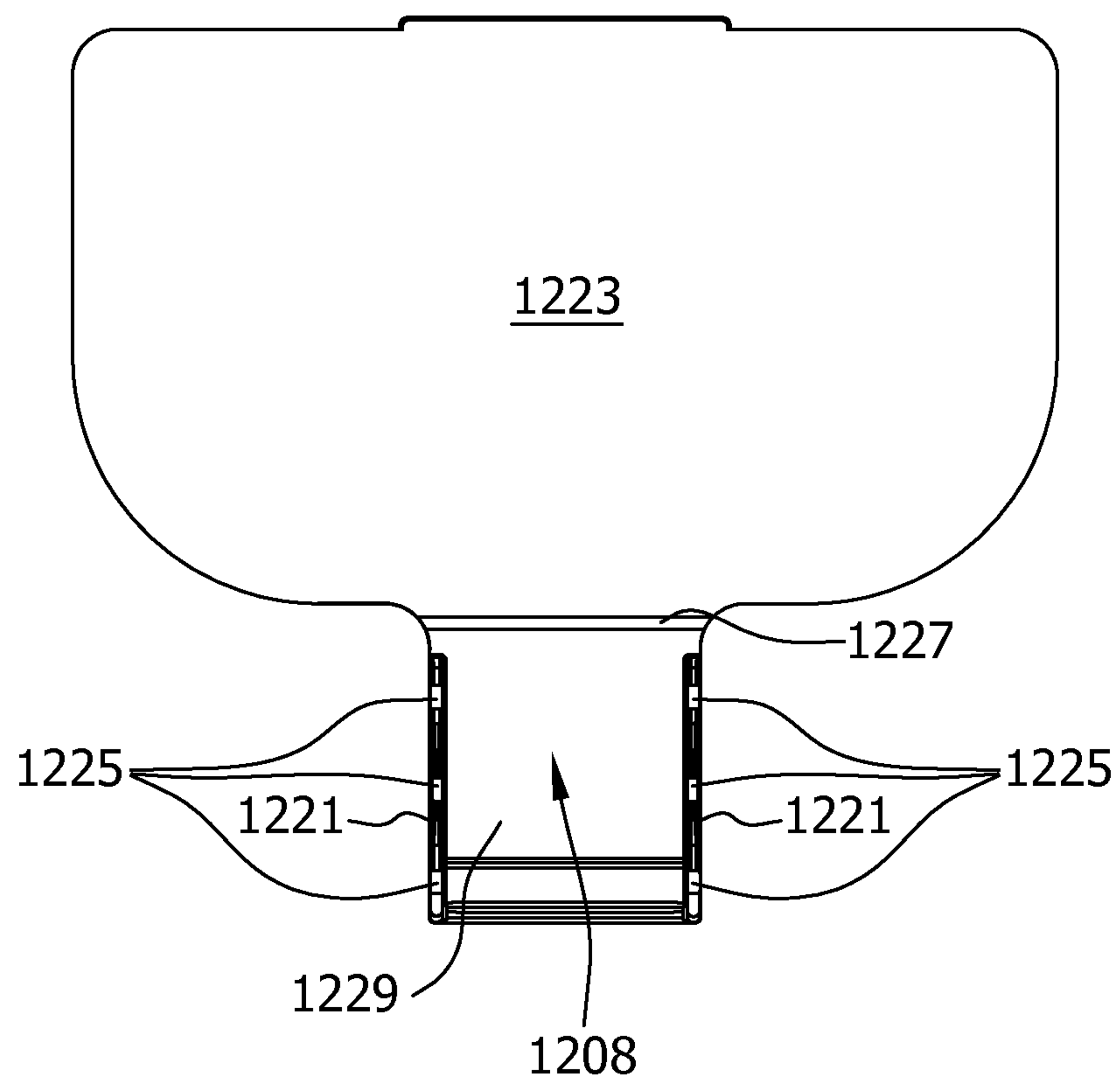
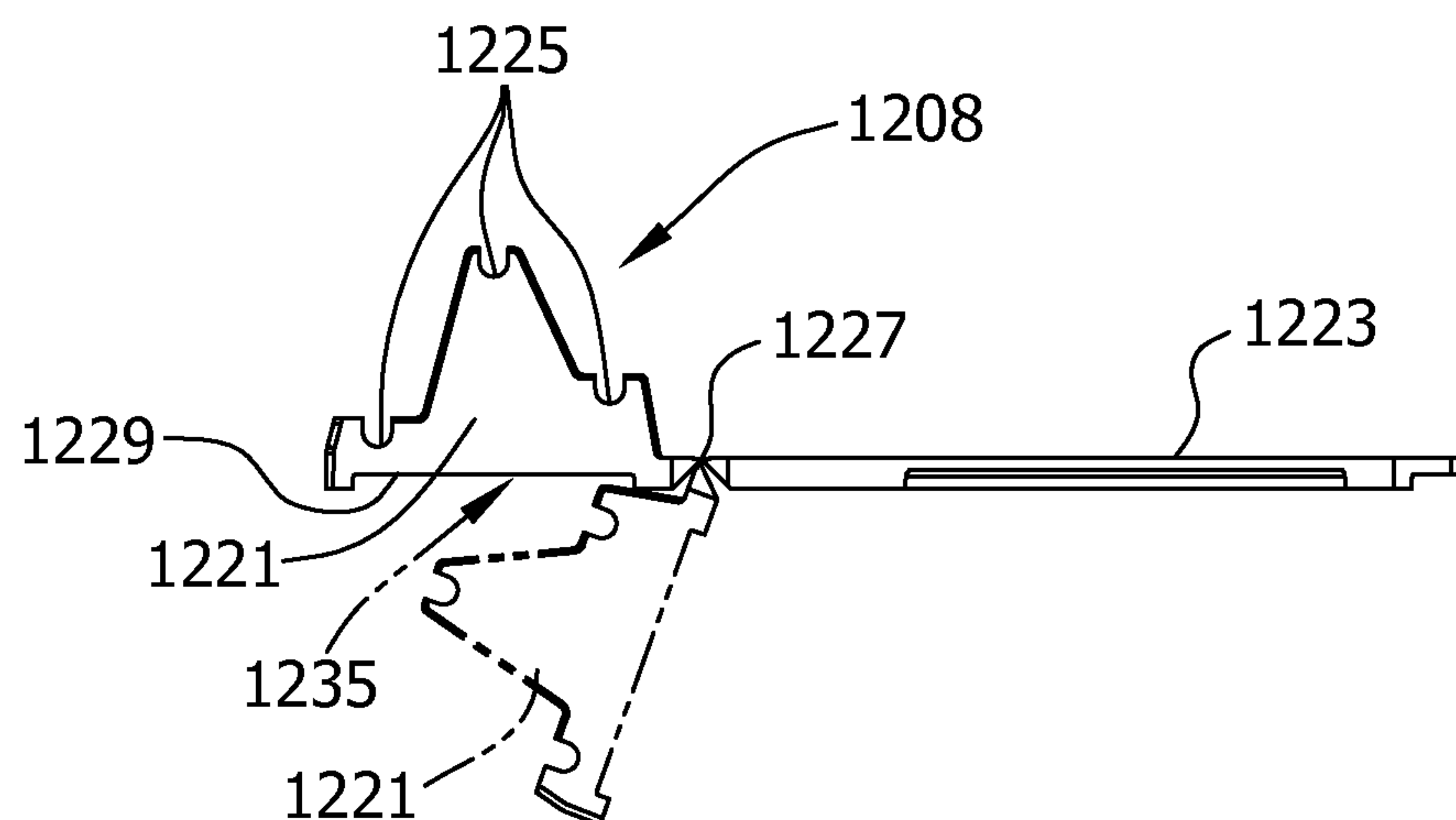
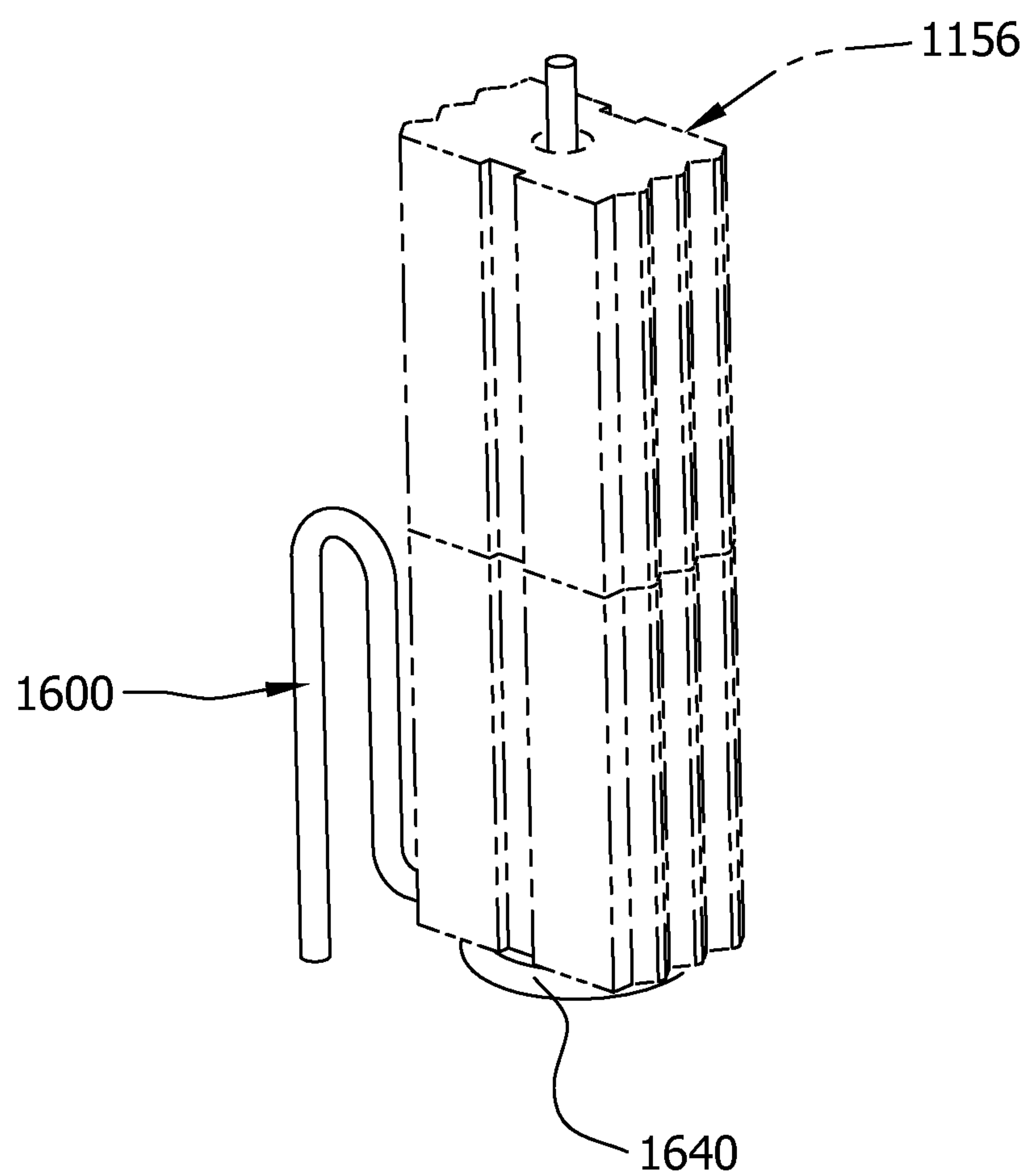


FIG. 71



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FIG. 72



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FIG. 73

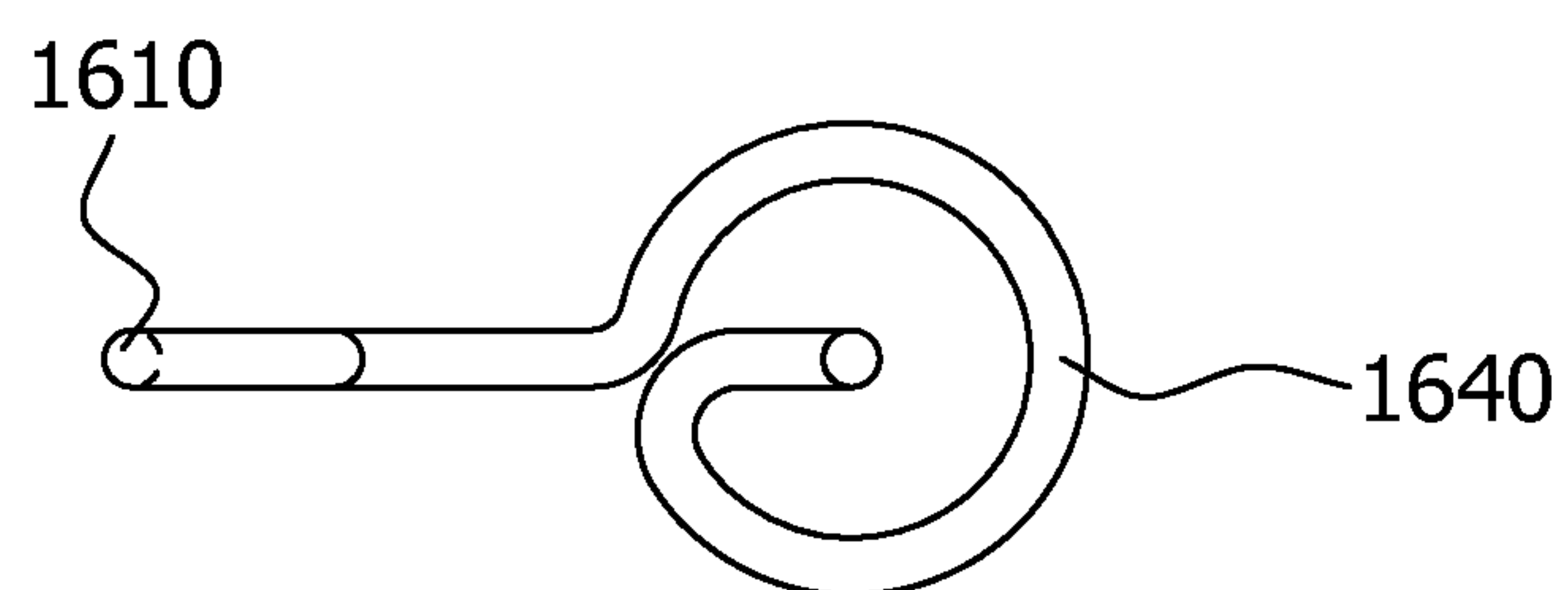
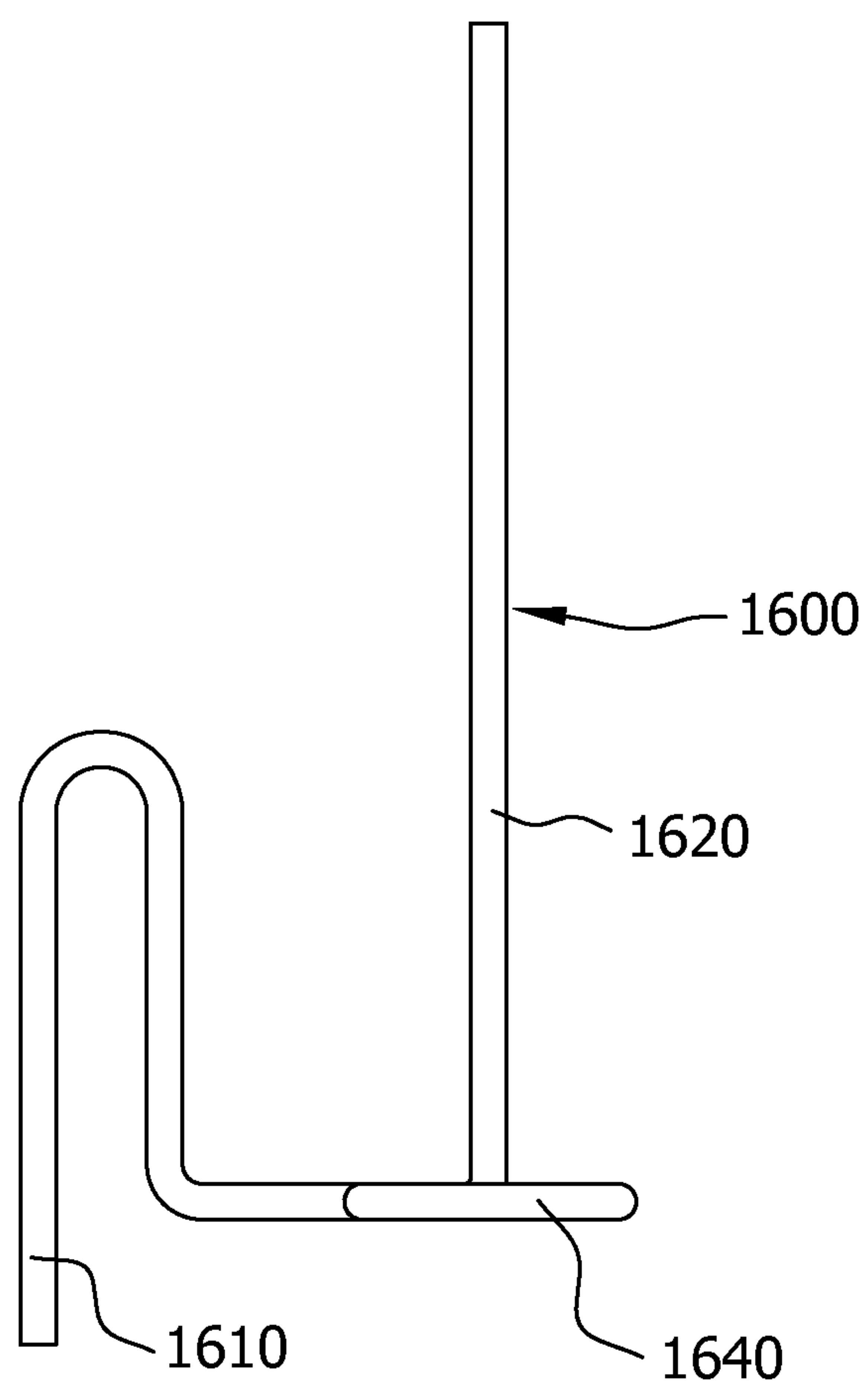


FIG. 74



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FIG. 75

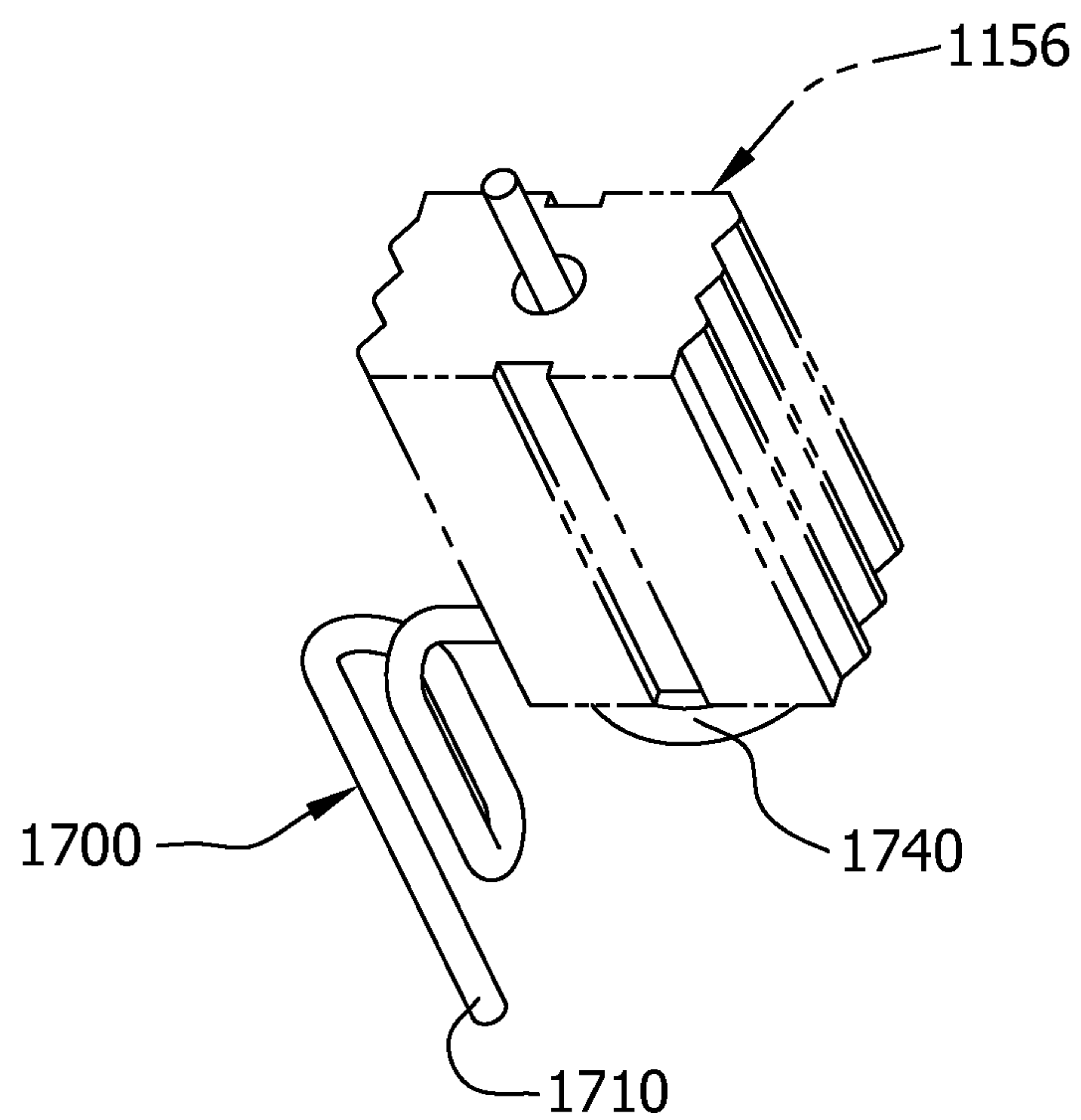
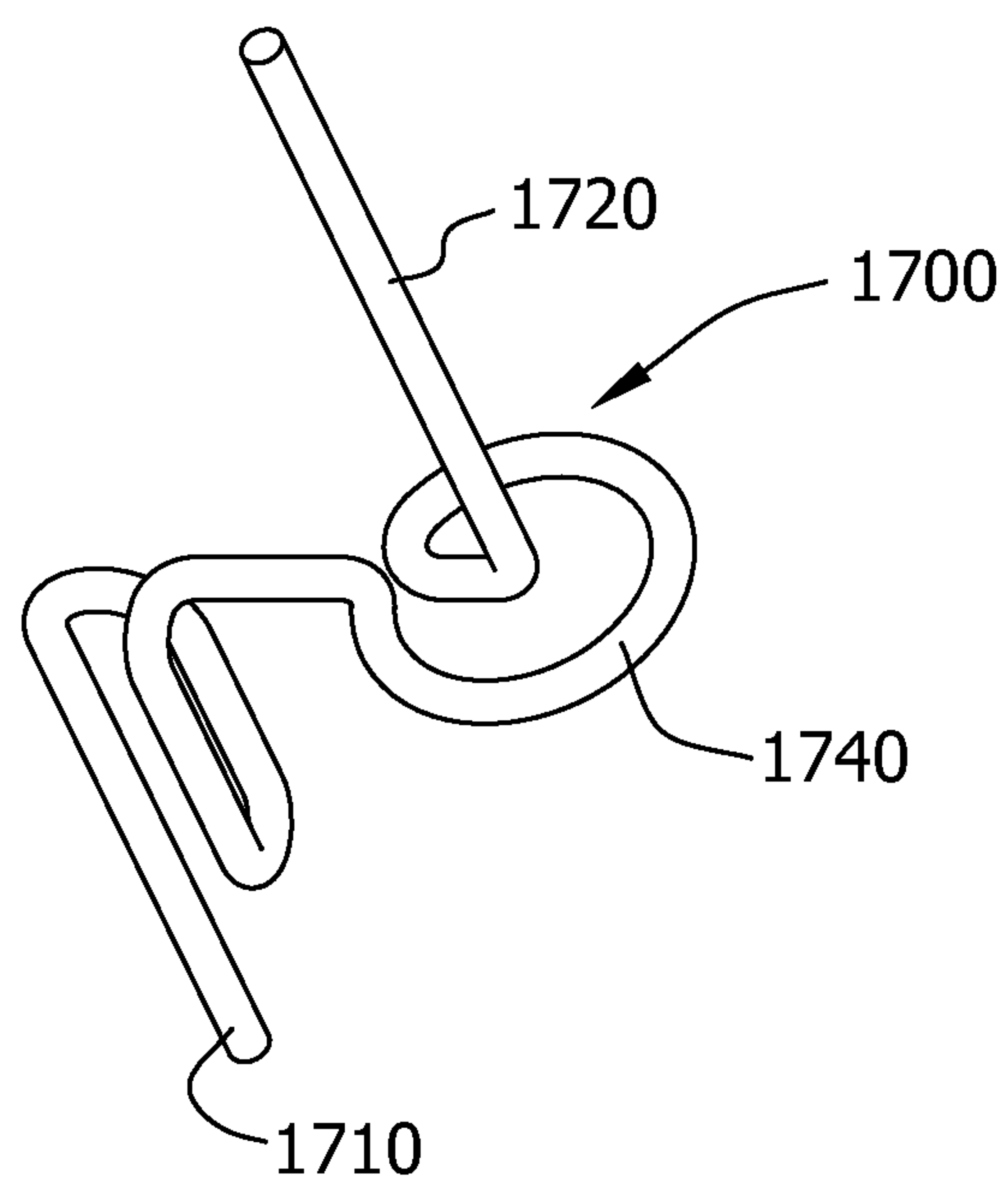


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FIG. 77

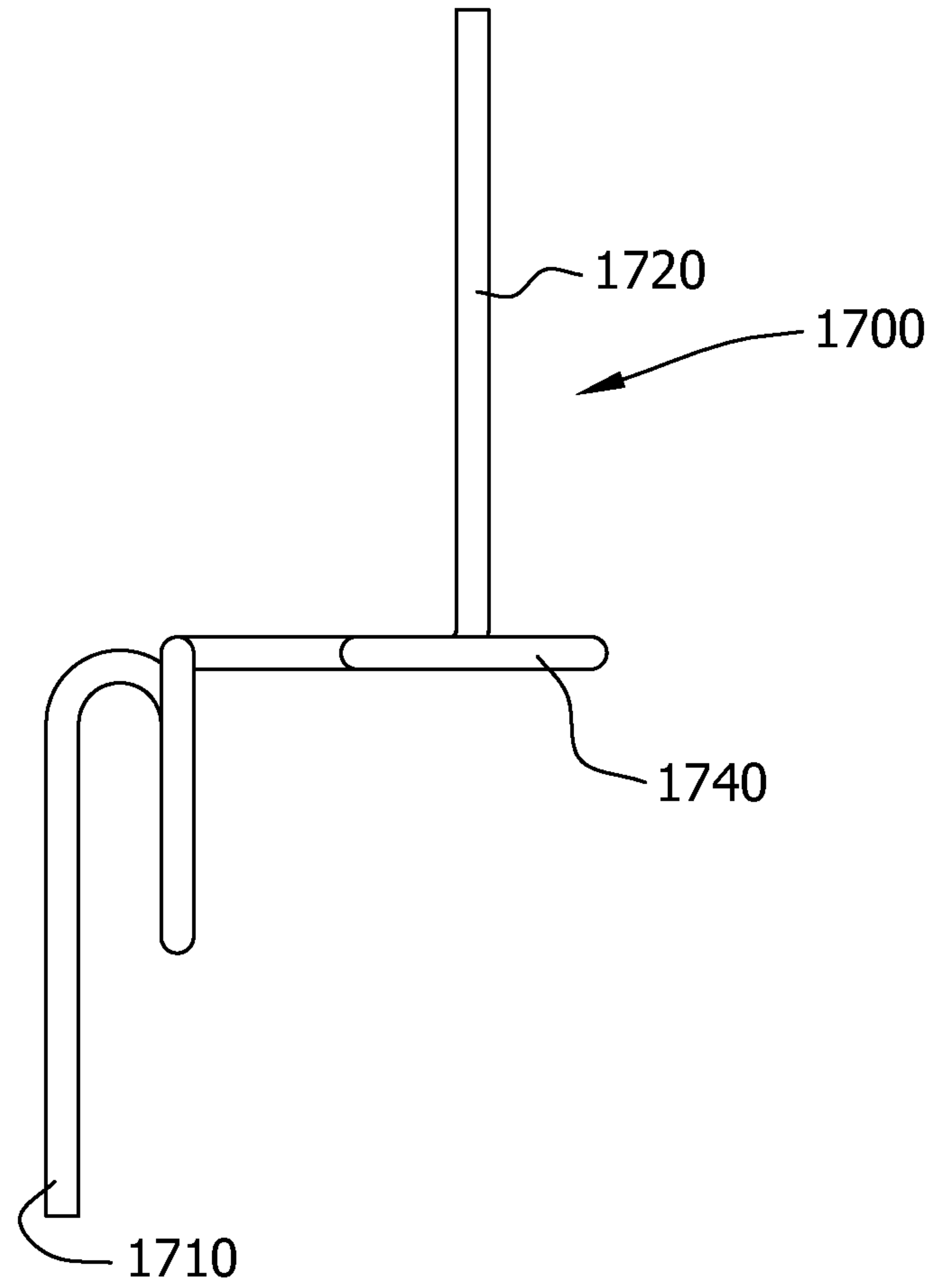
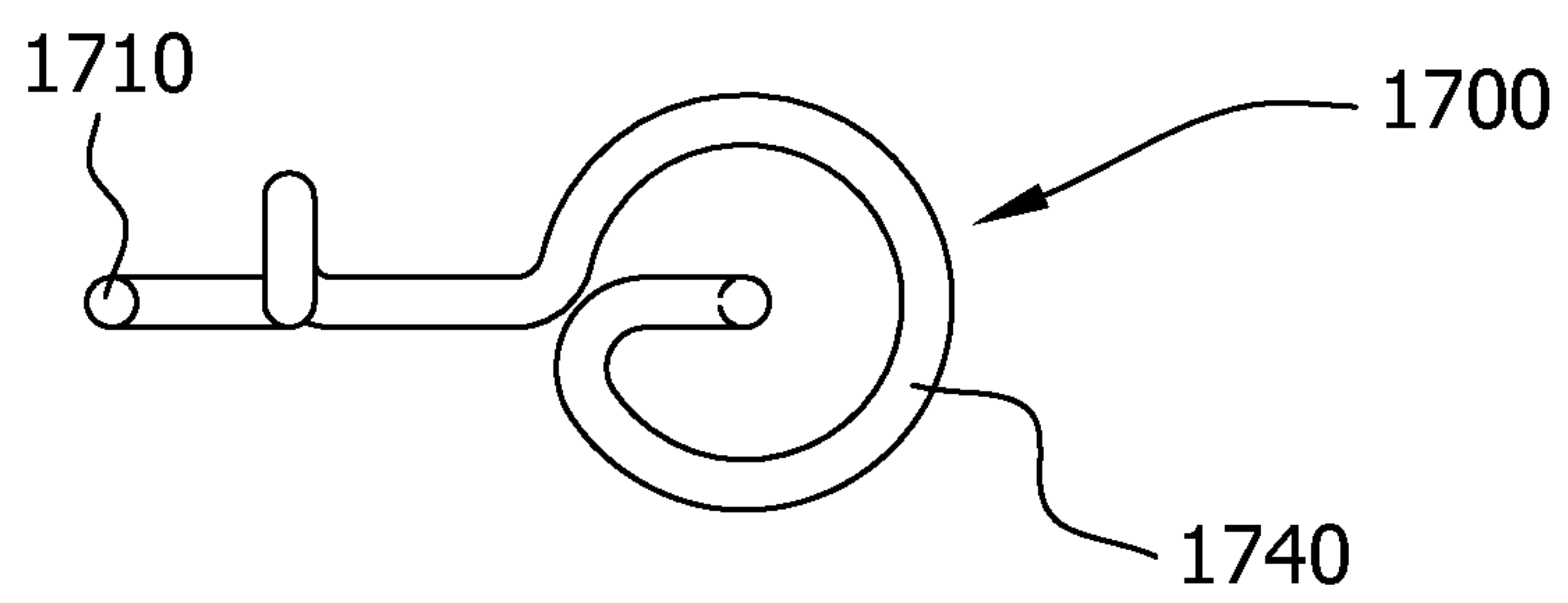
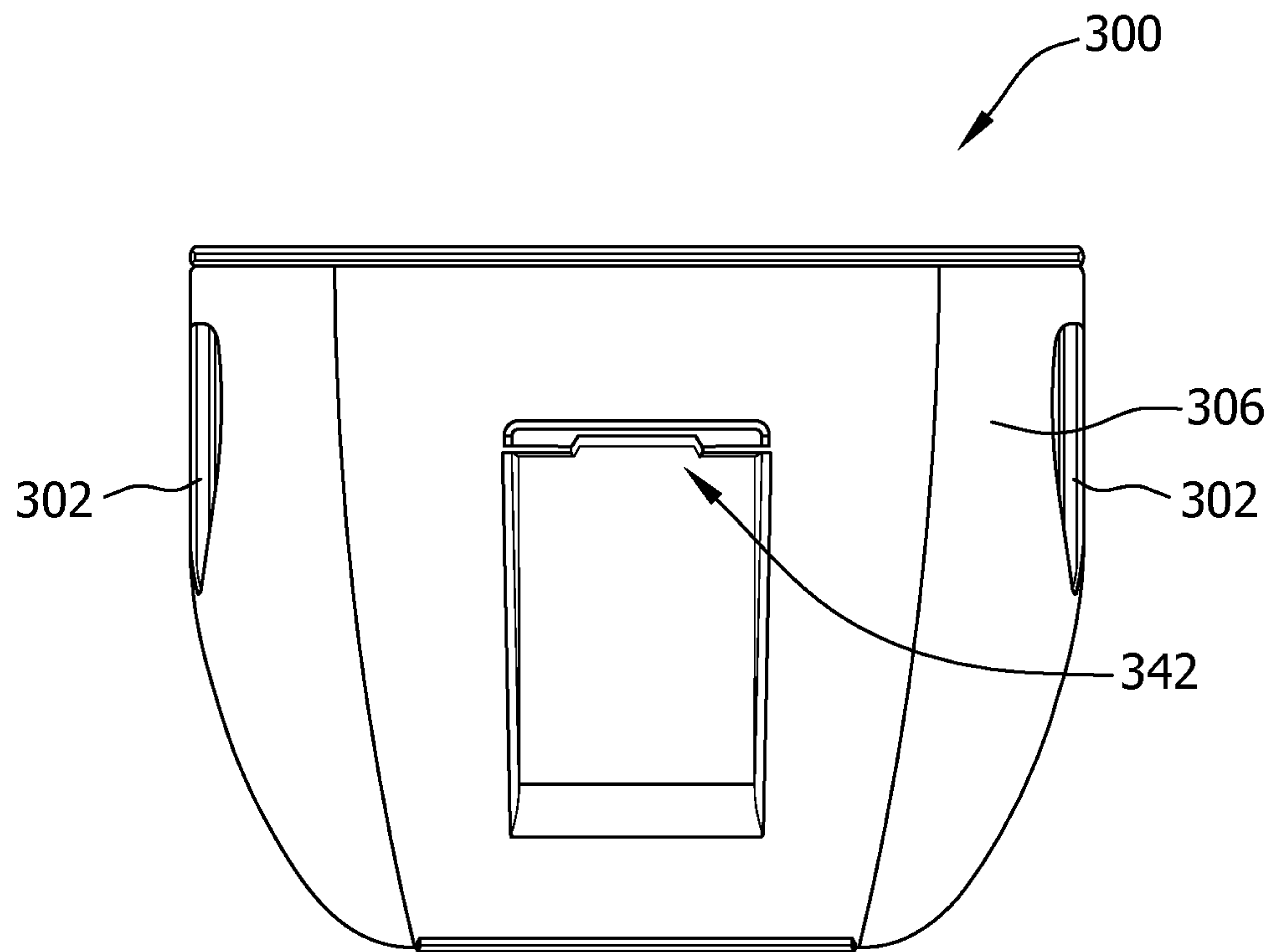


FIG. 78



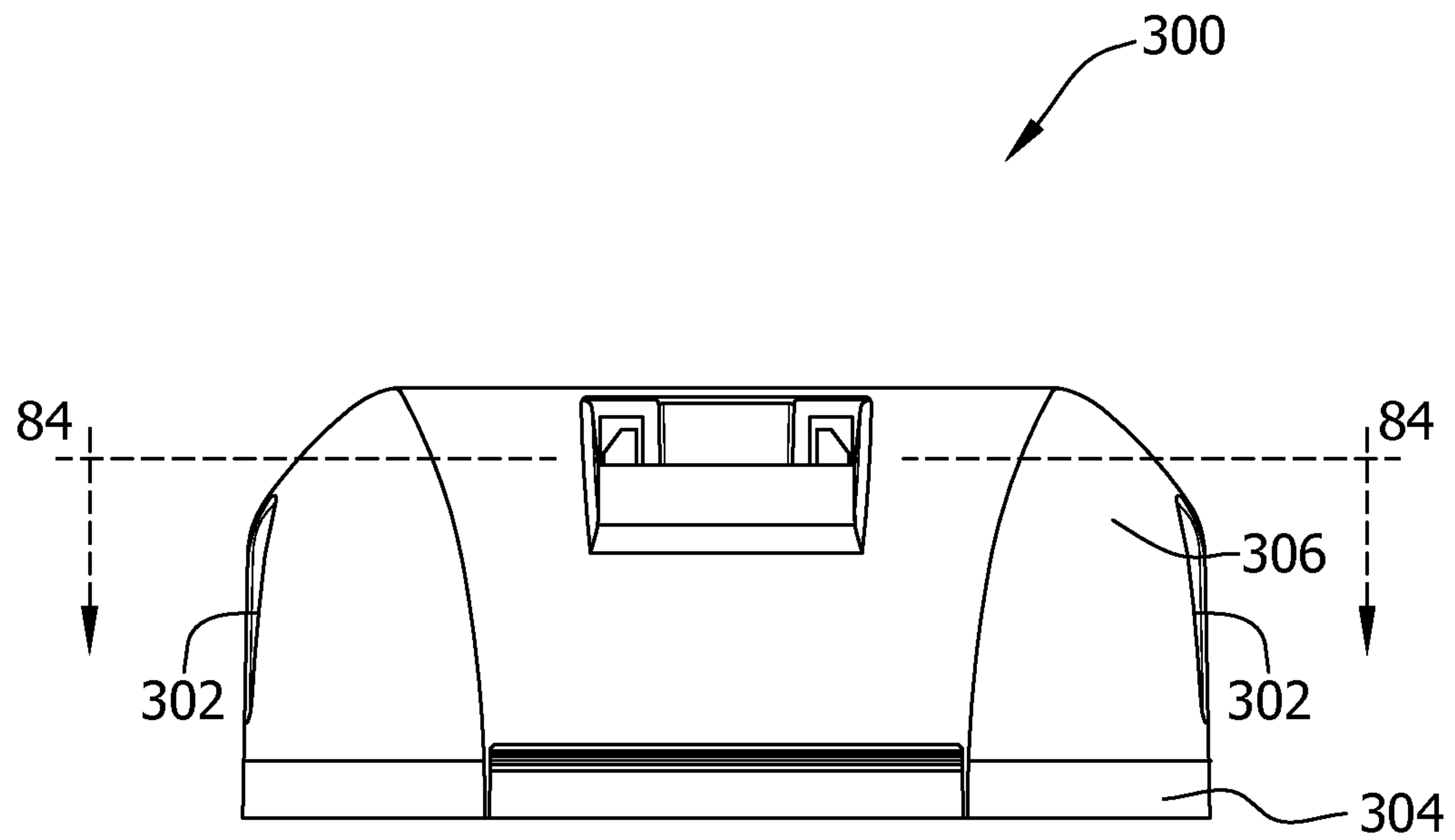
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FIG. 79



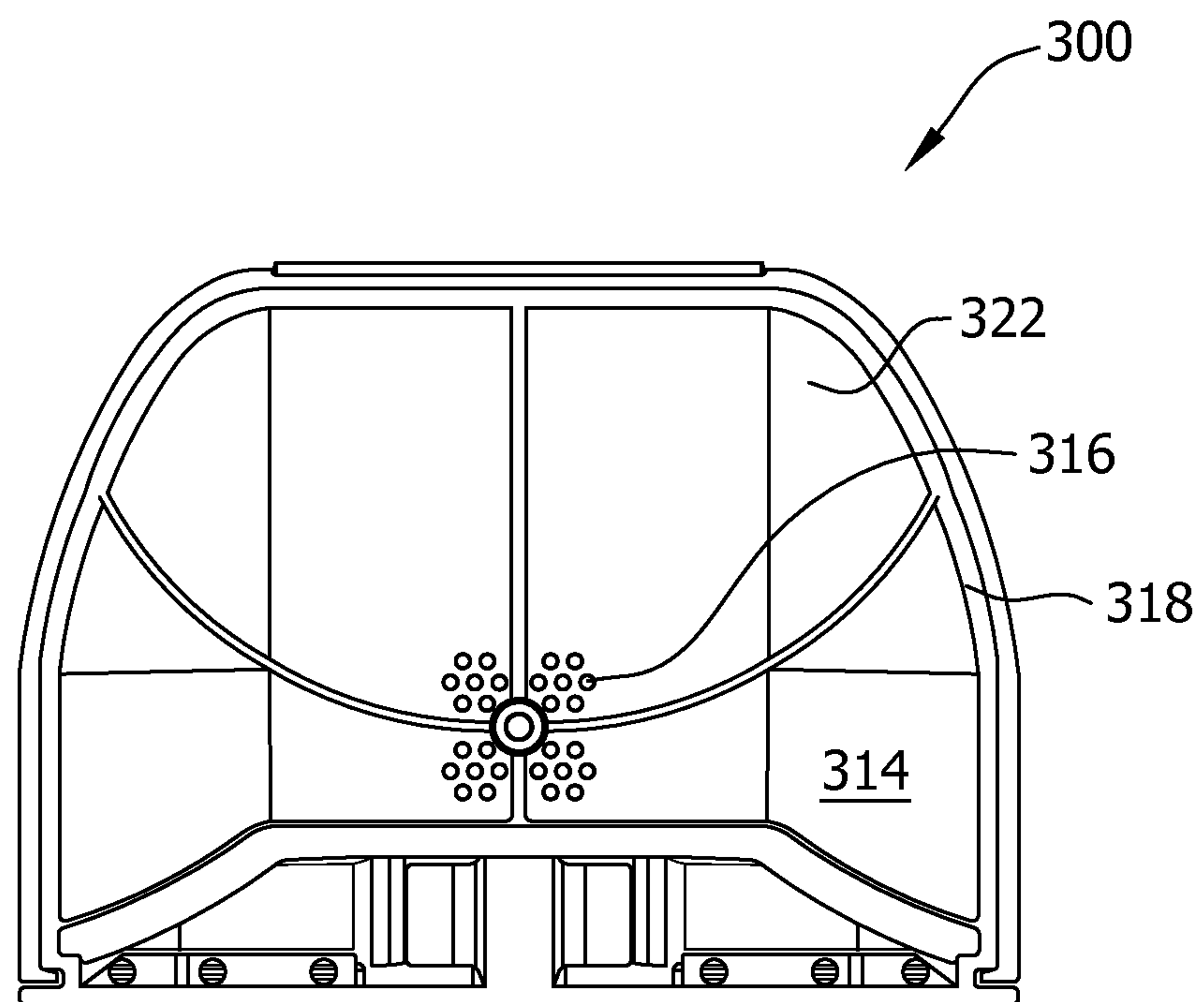
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FIG. 80



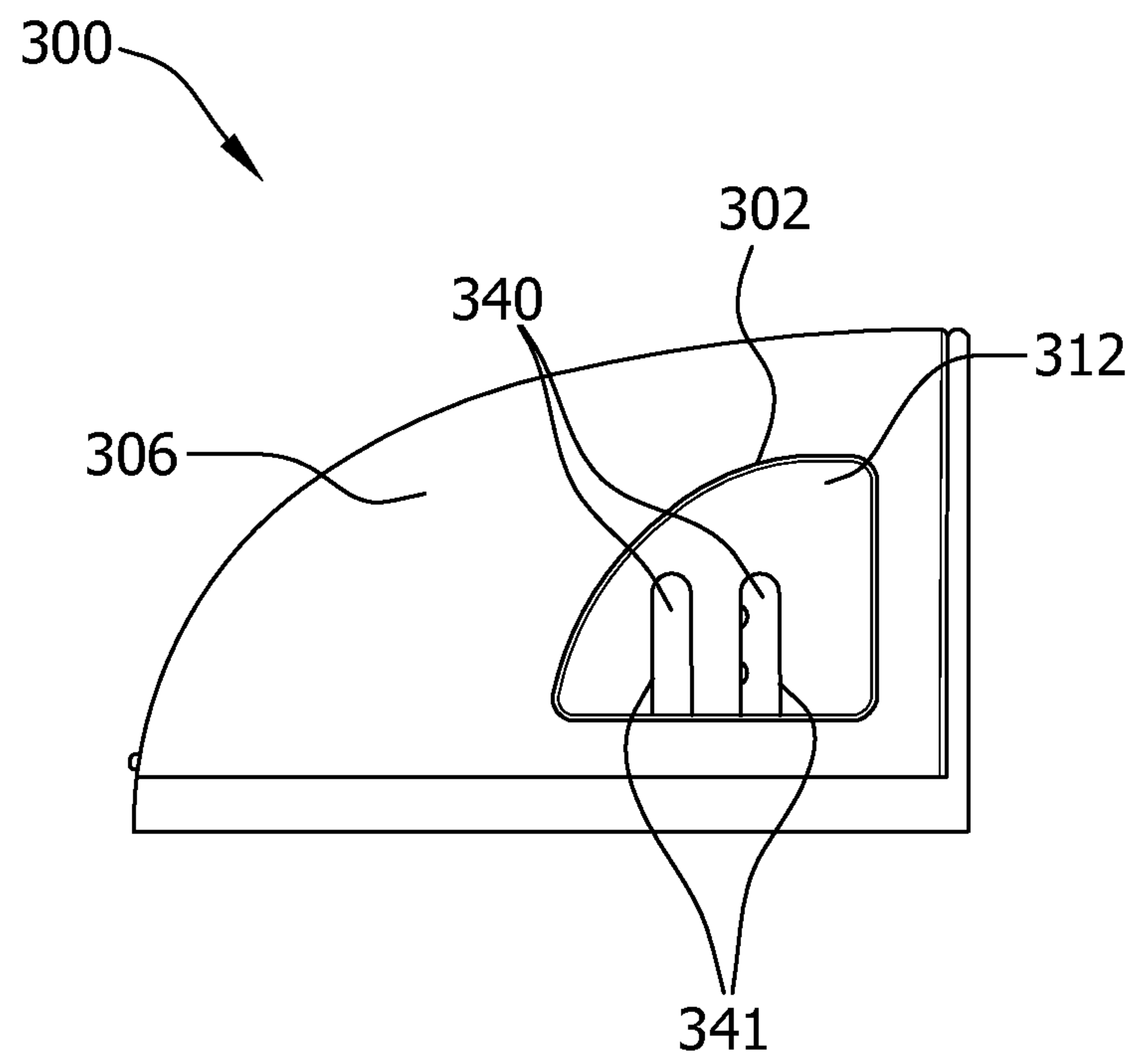
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FIG. 81



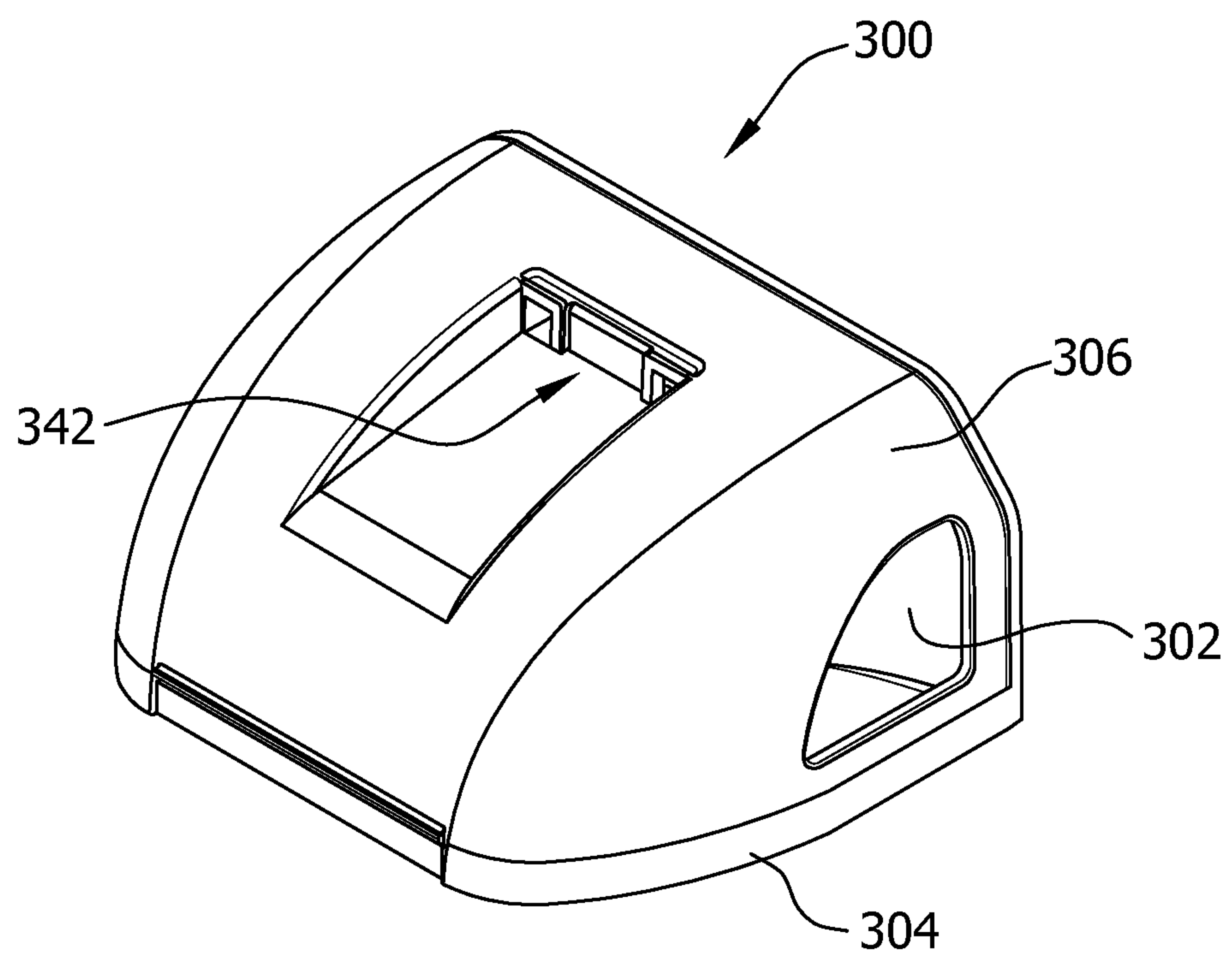
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FIG. 82



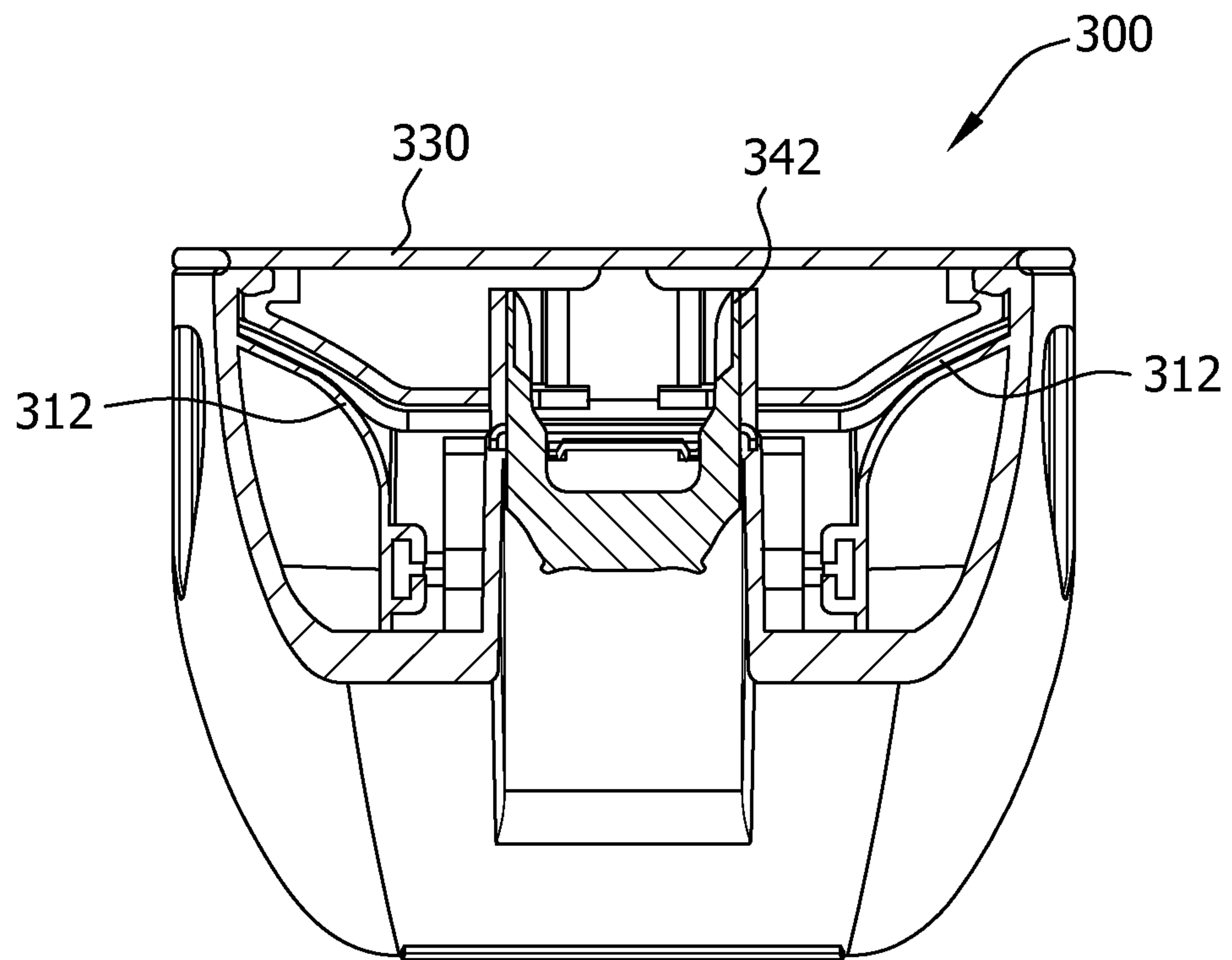
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FIG. 83



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FIG. 84



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FIG. 85

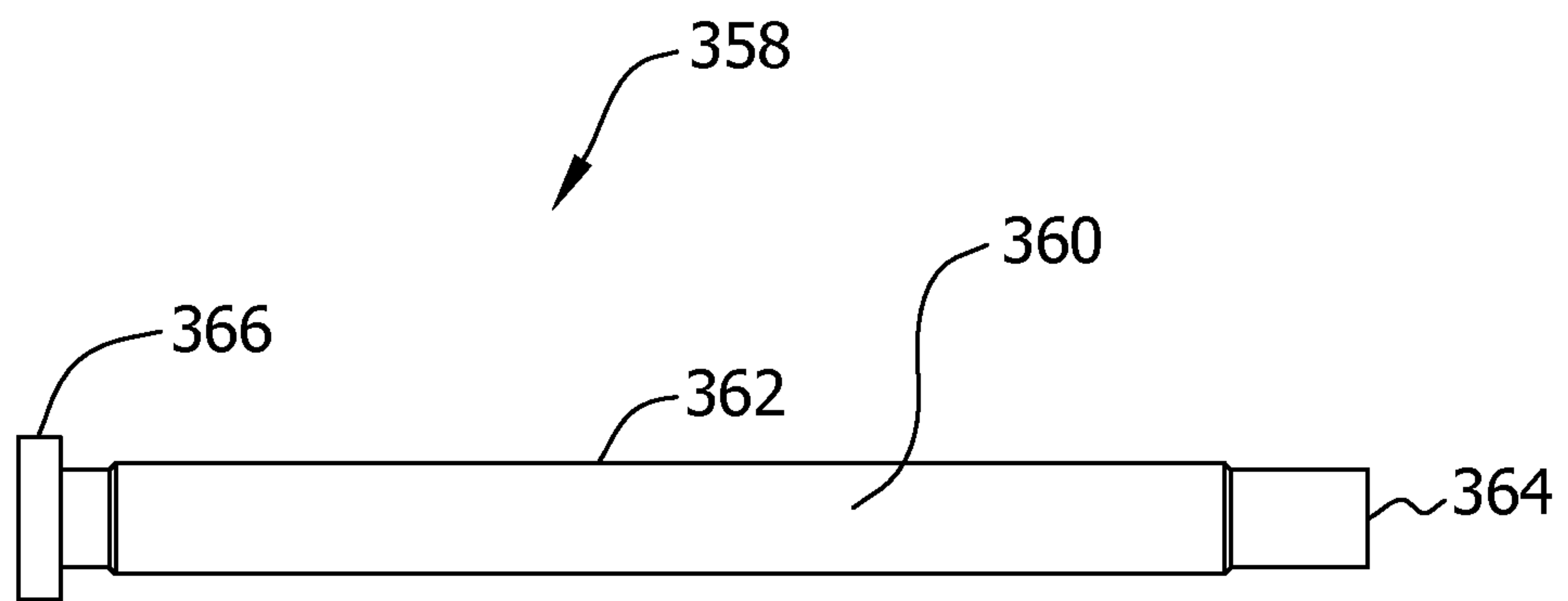
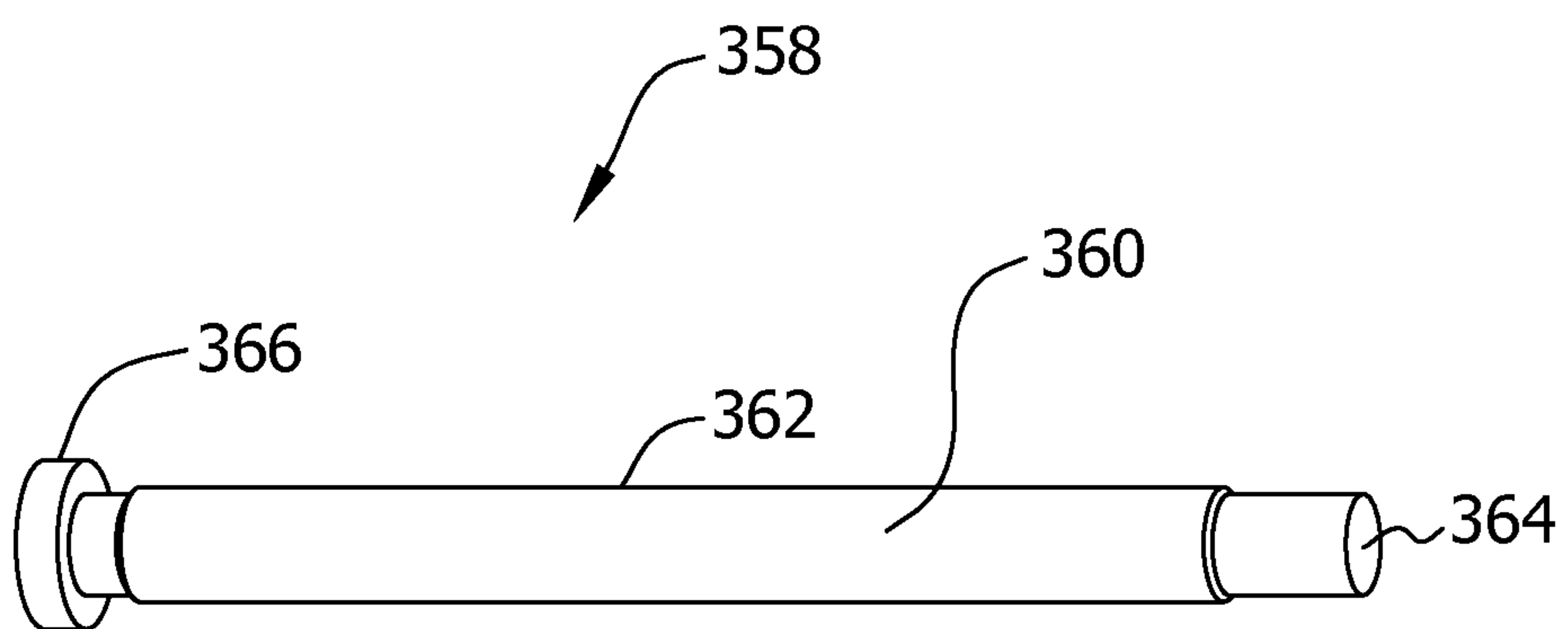


FIG. 86



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FIG. 87

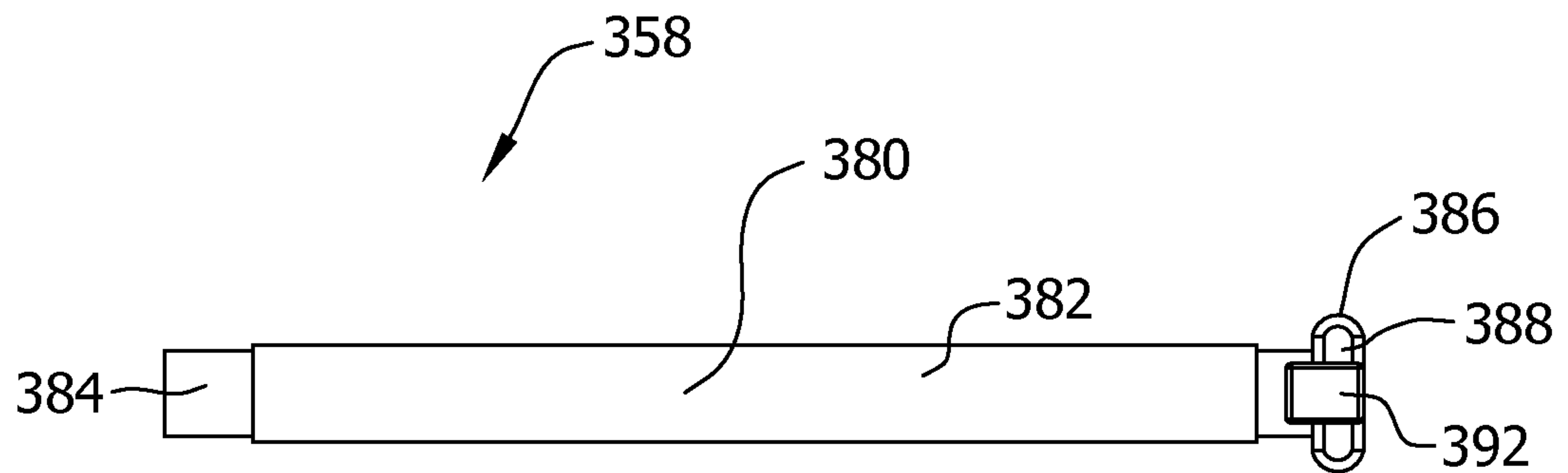


FIG. 88

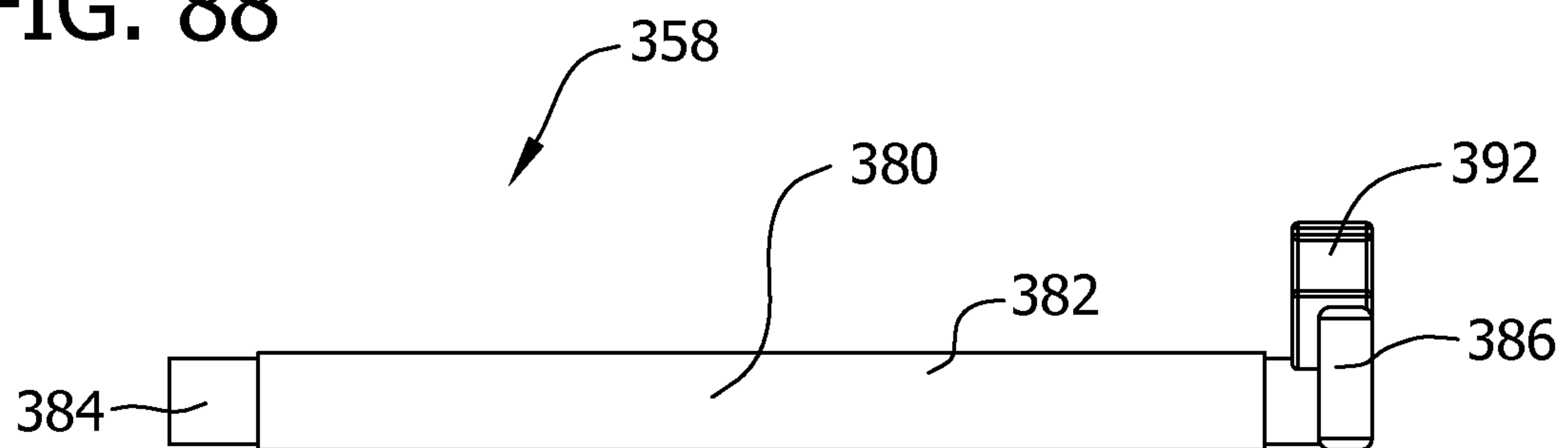
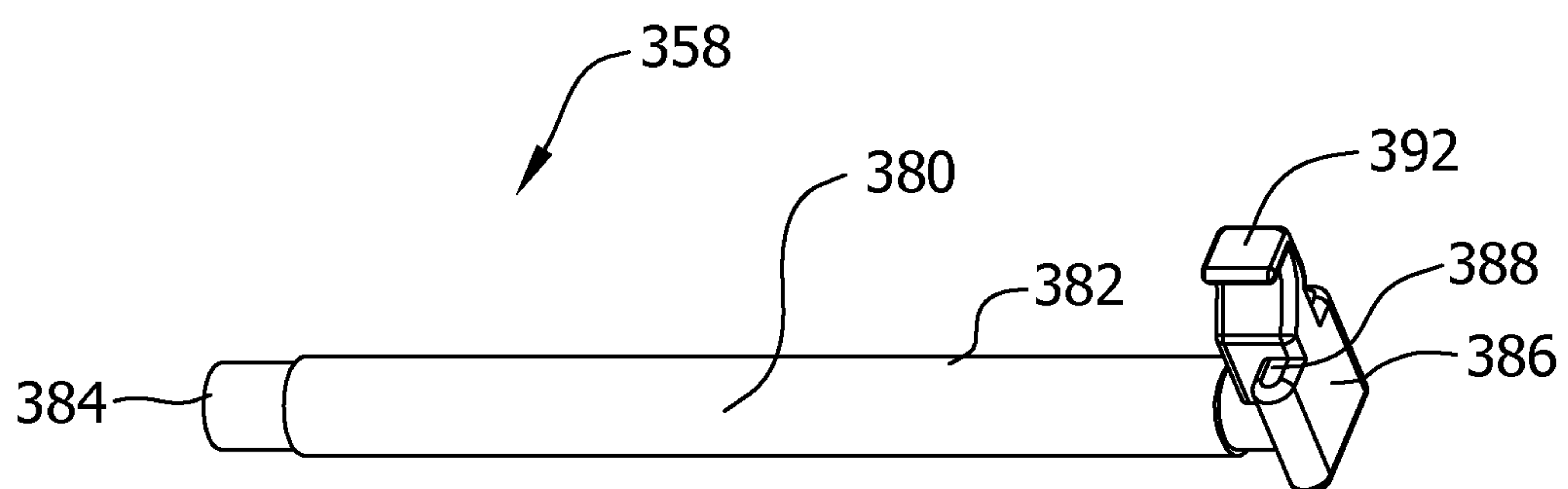
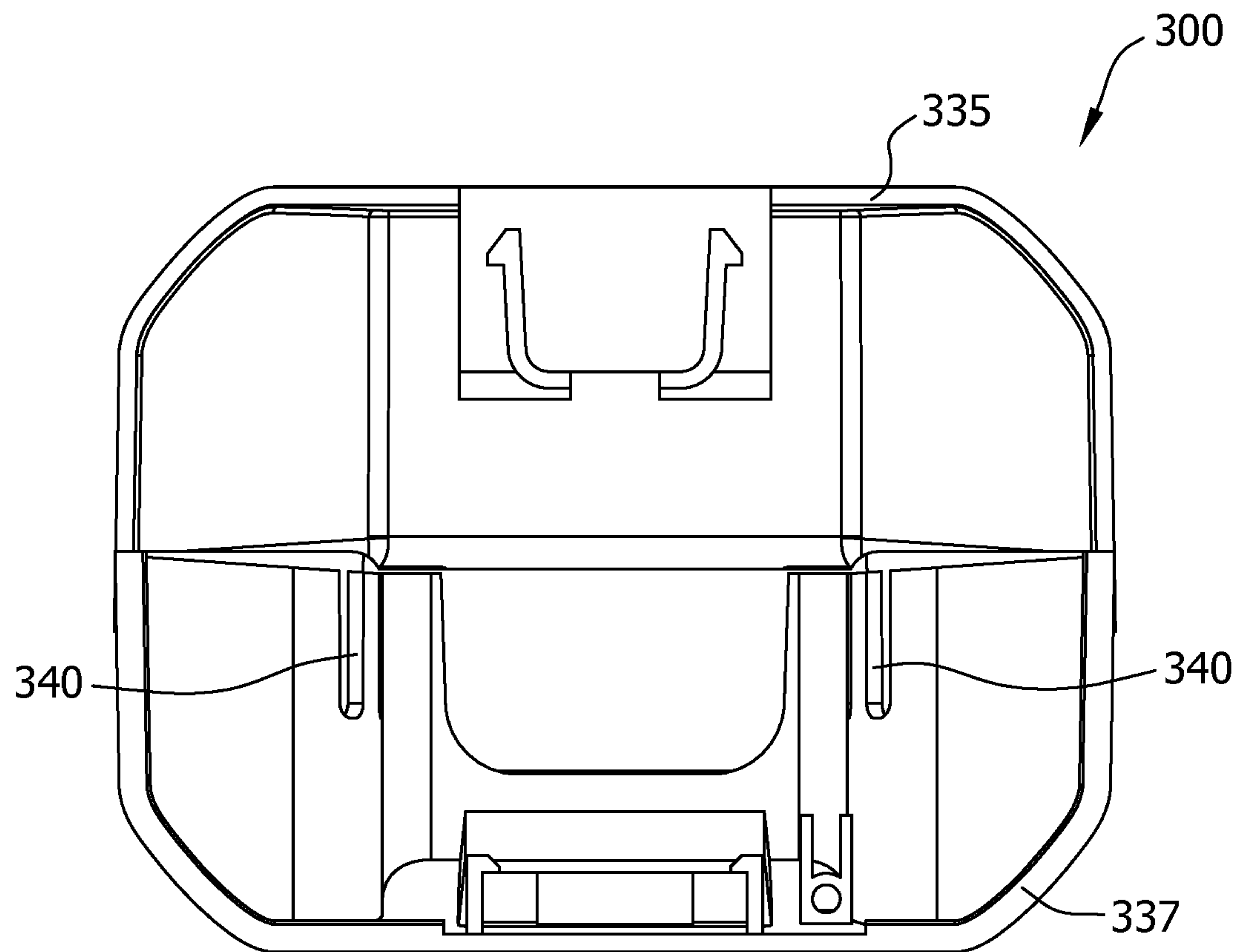


FIG. 89



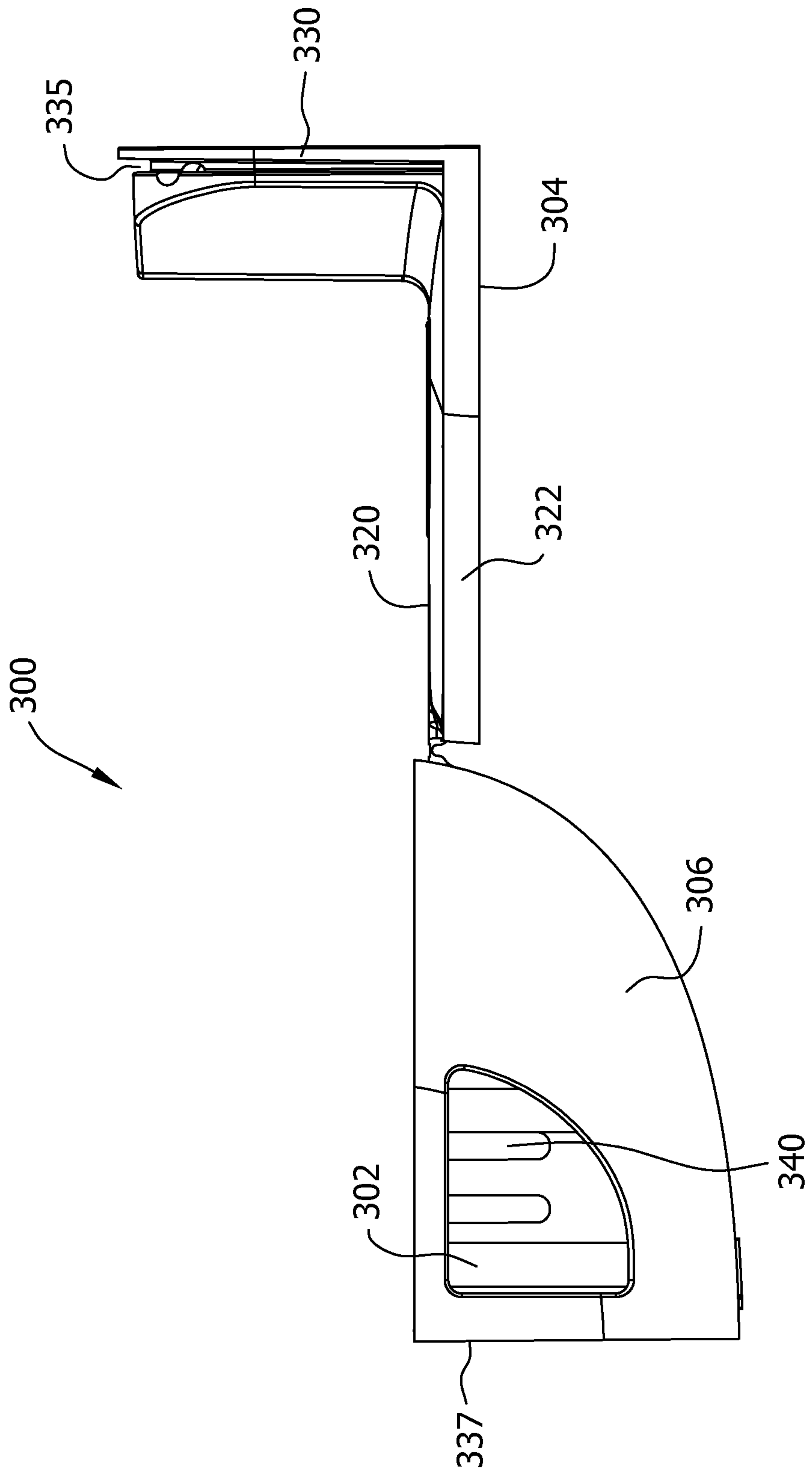
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FIG. 90



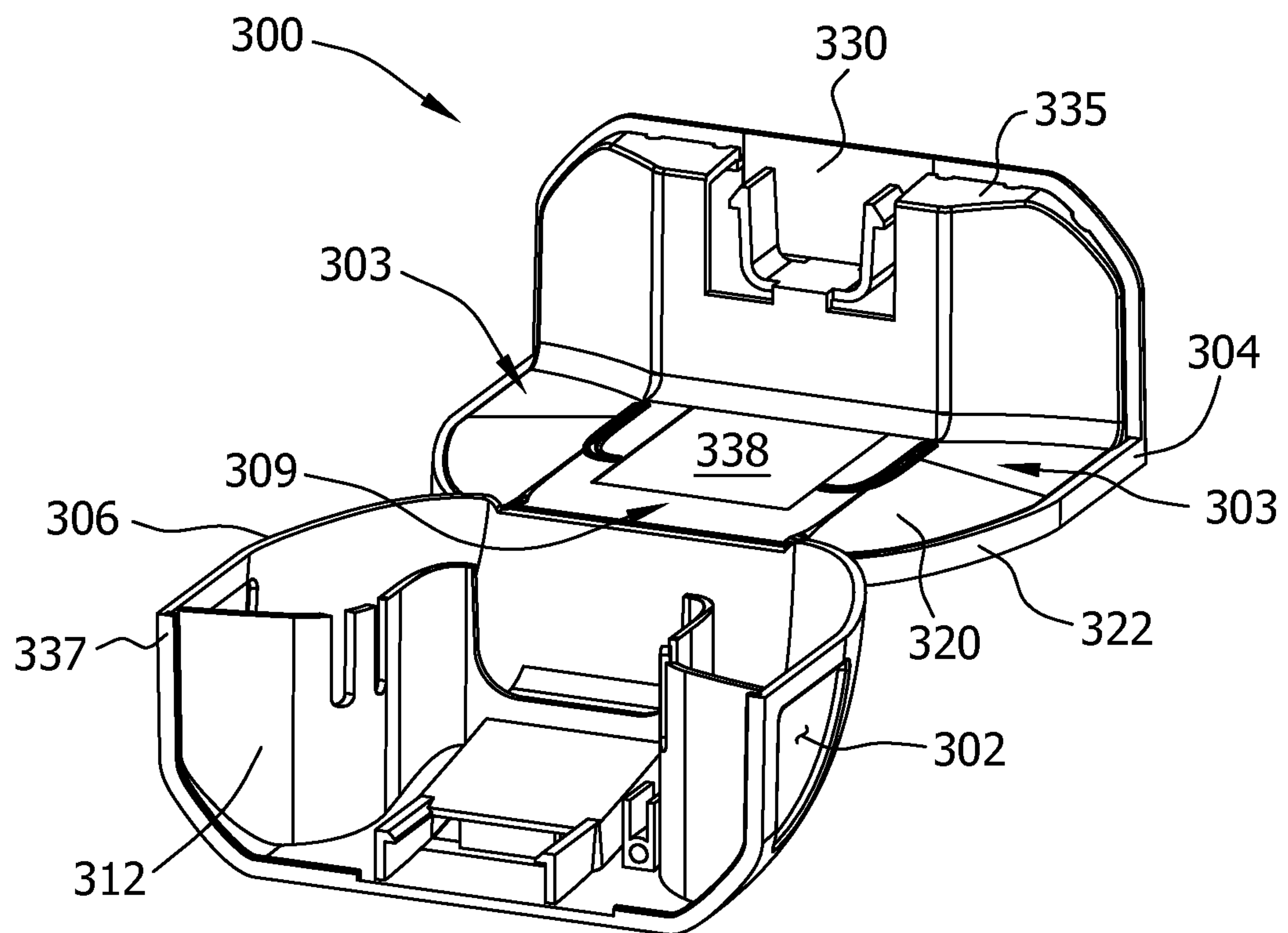
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FIG. 91



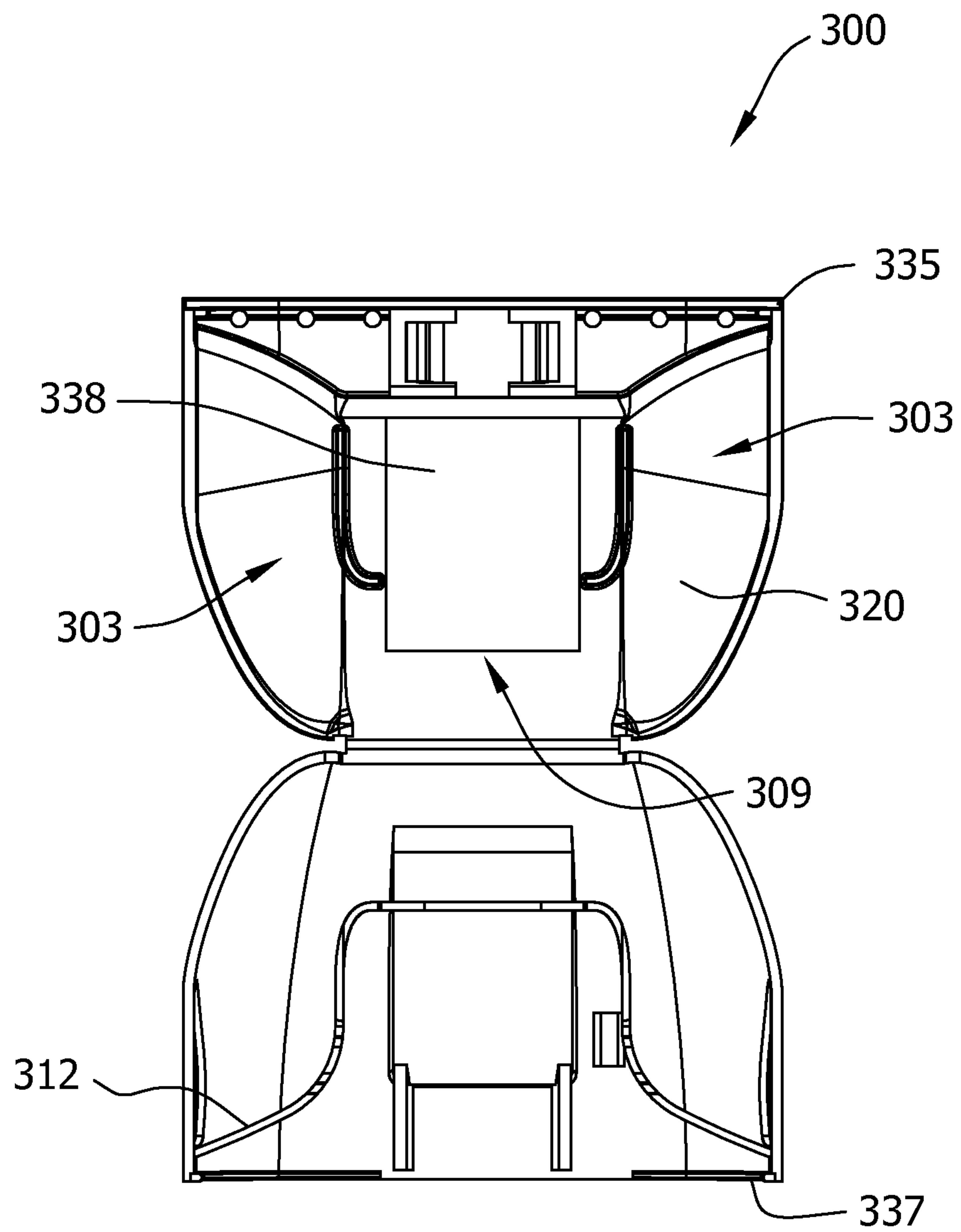
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FIG. 92



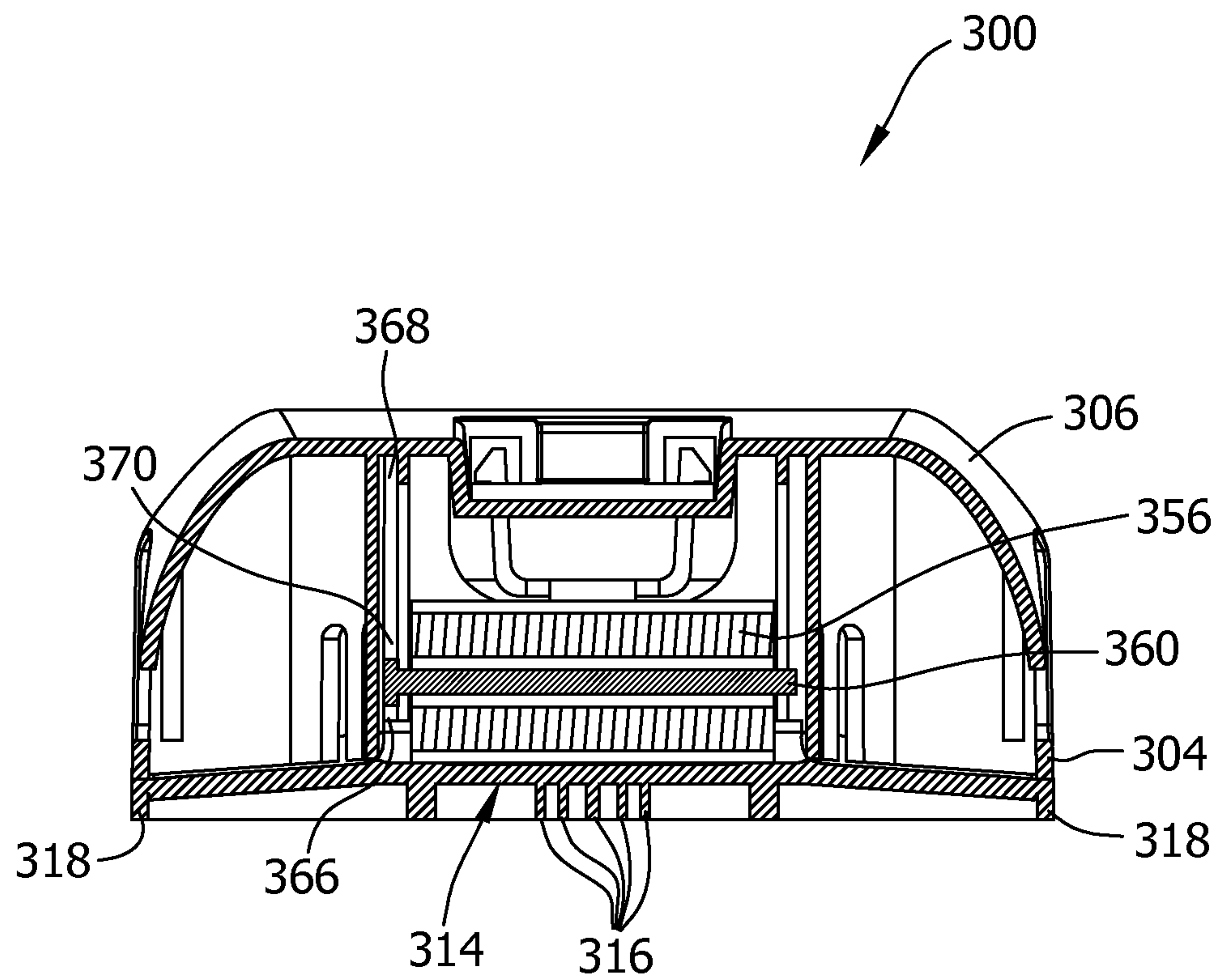
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FIG. 93



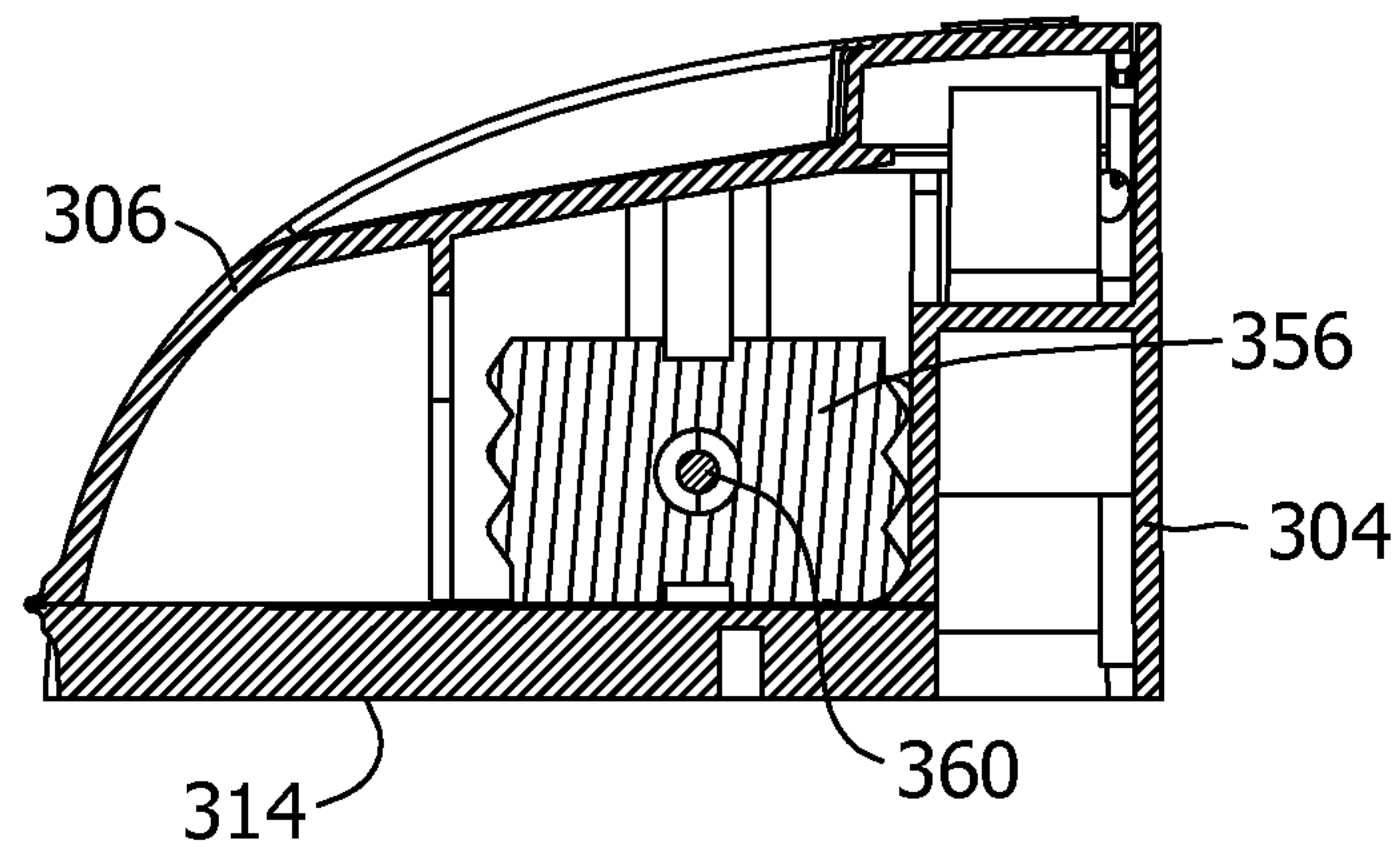
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FIG. 94



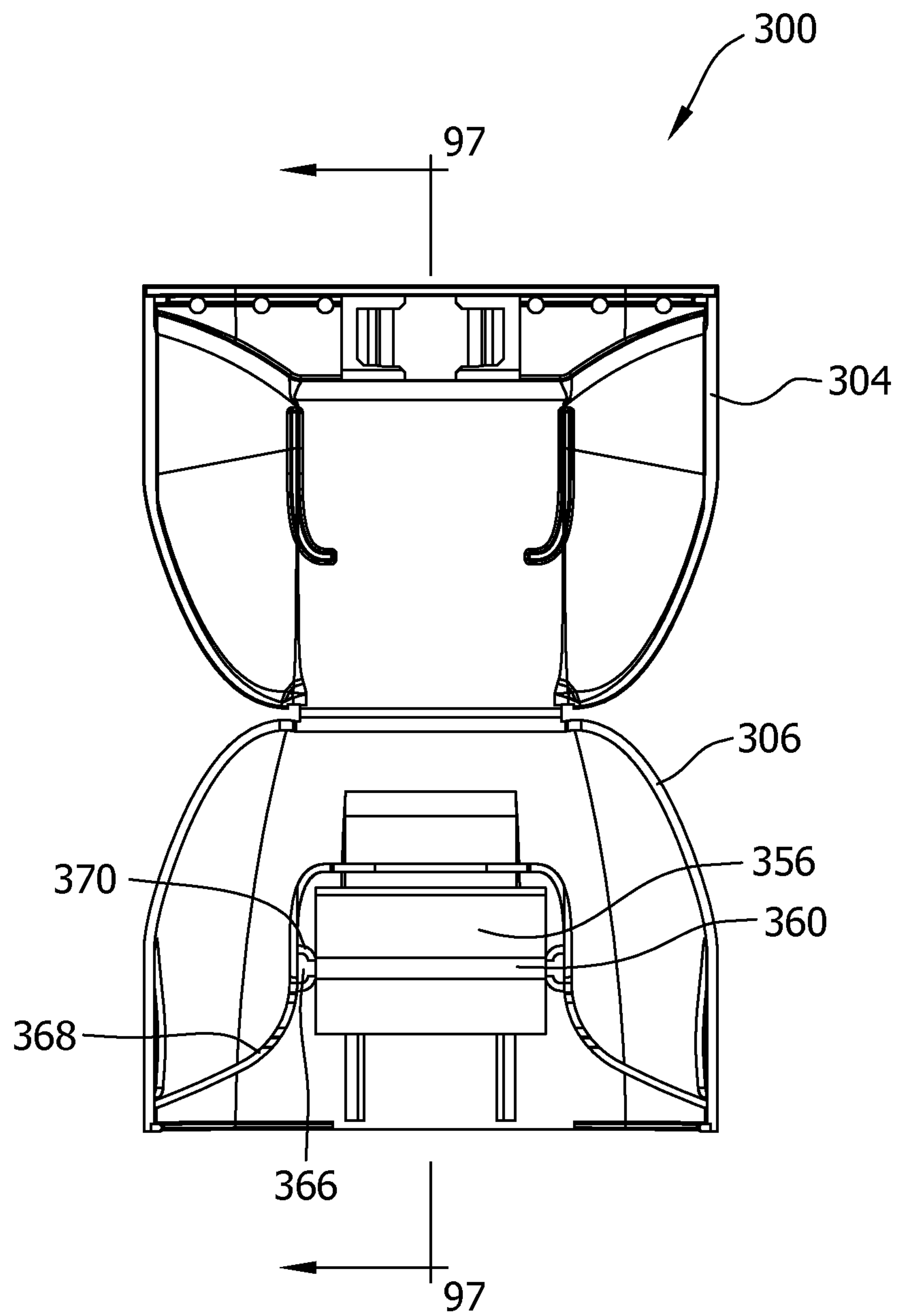
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FIG. 95



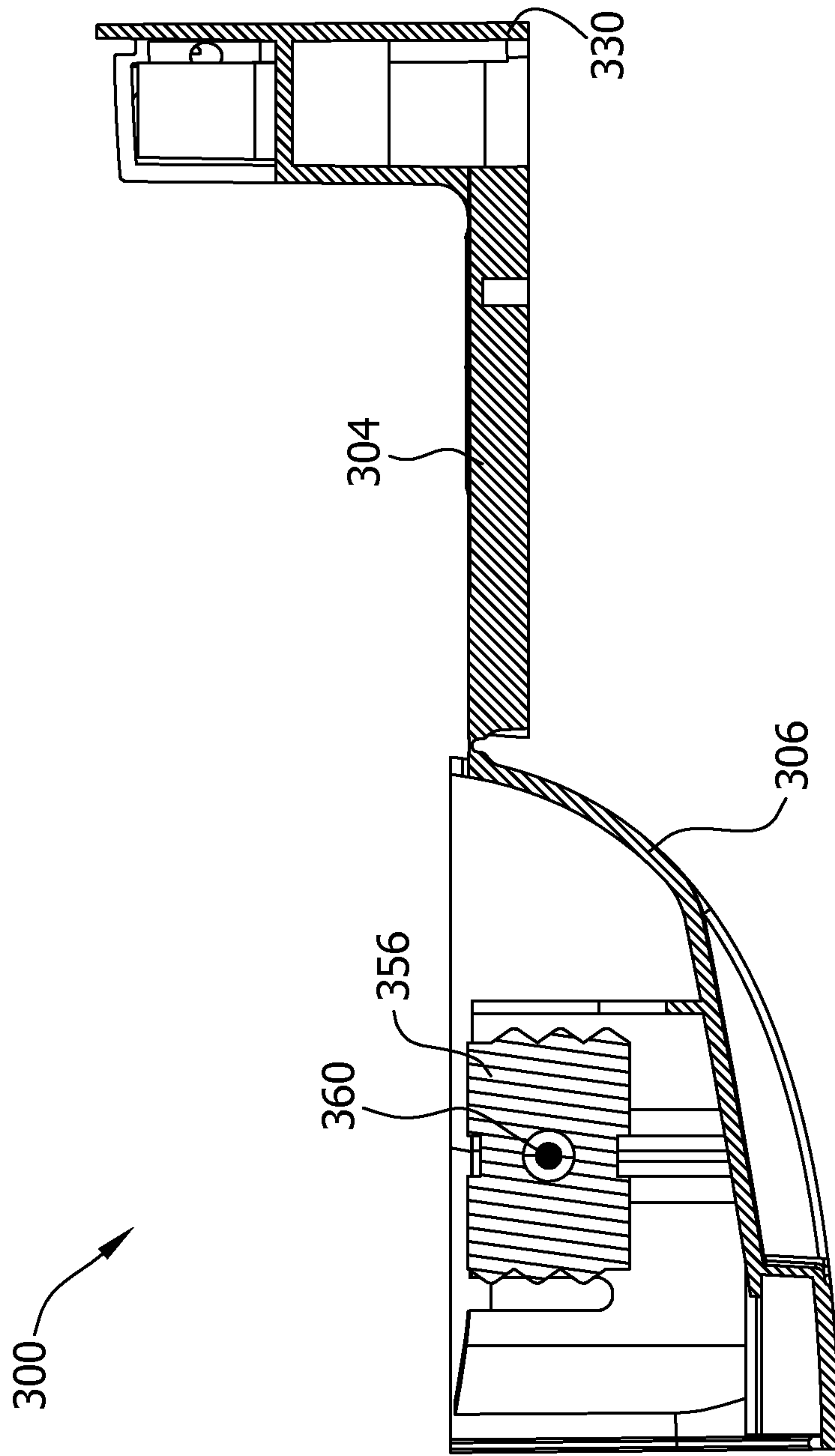
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FIG. 96



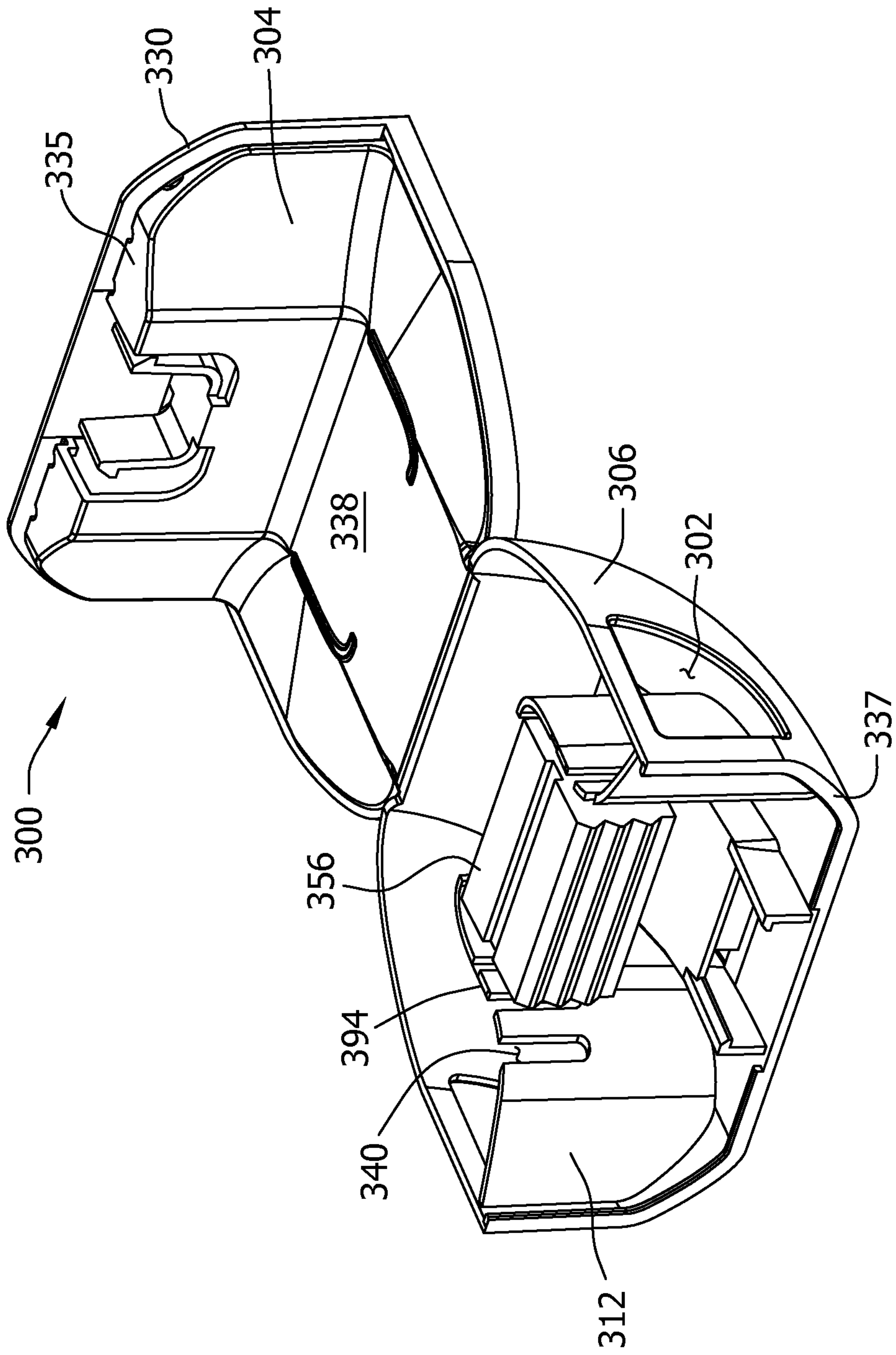
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FIG. 97



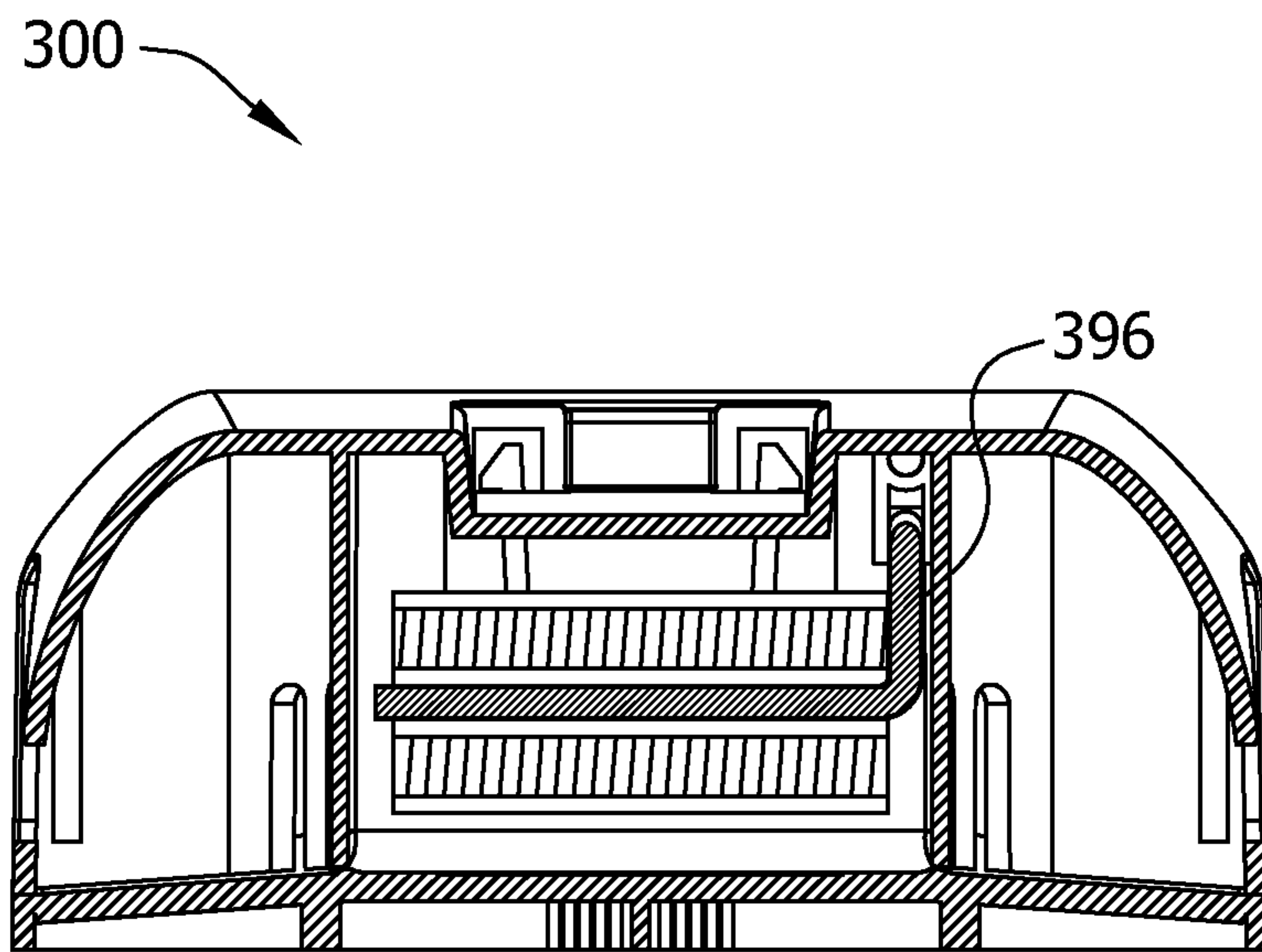
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FIG. 98



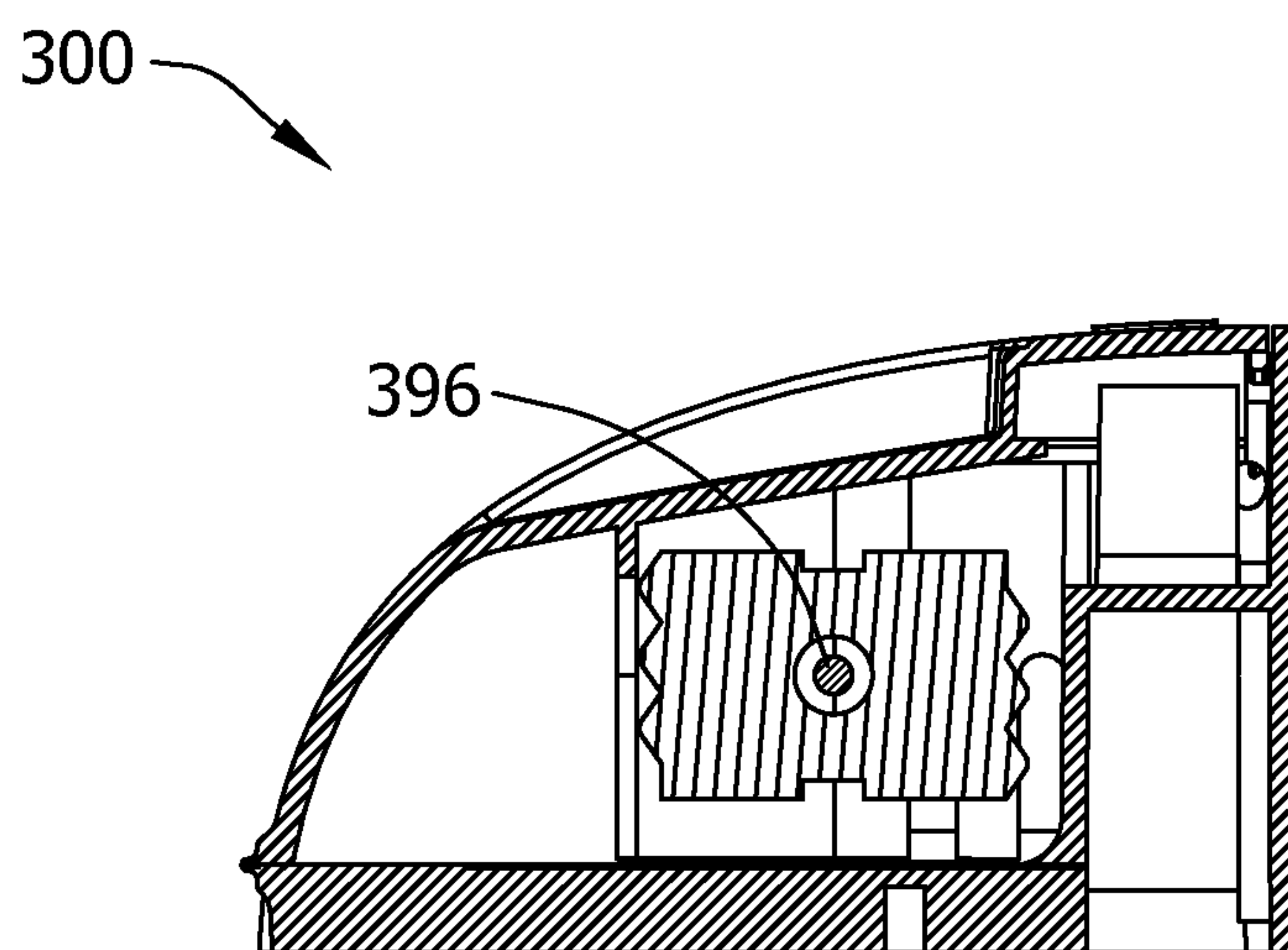
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FIG. 99



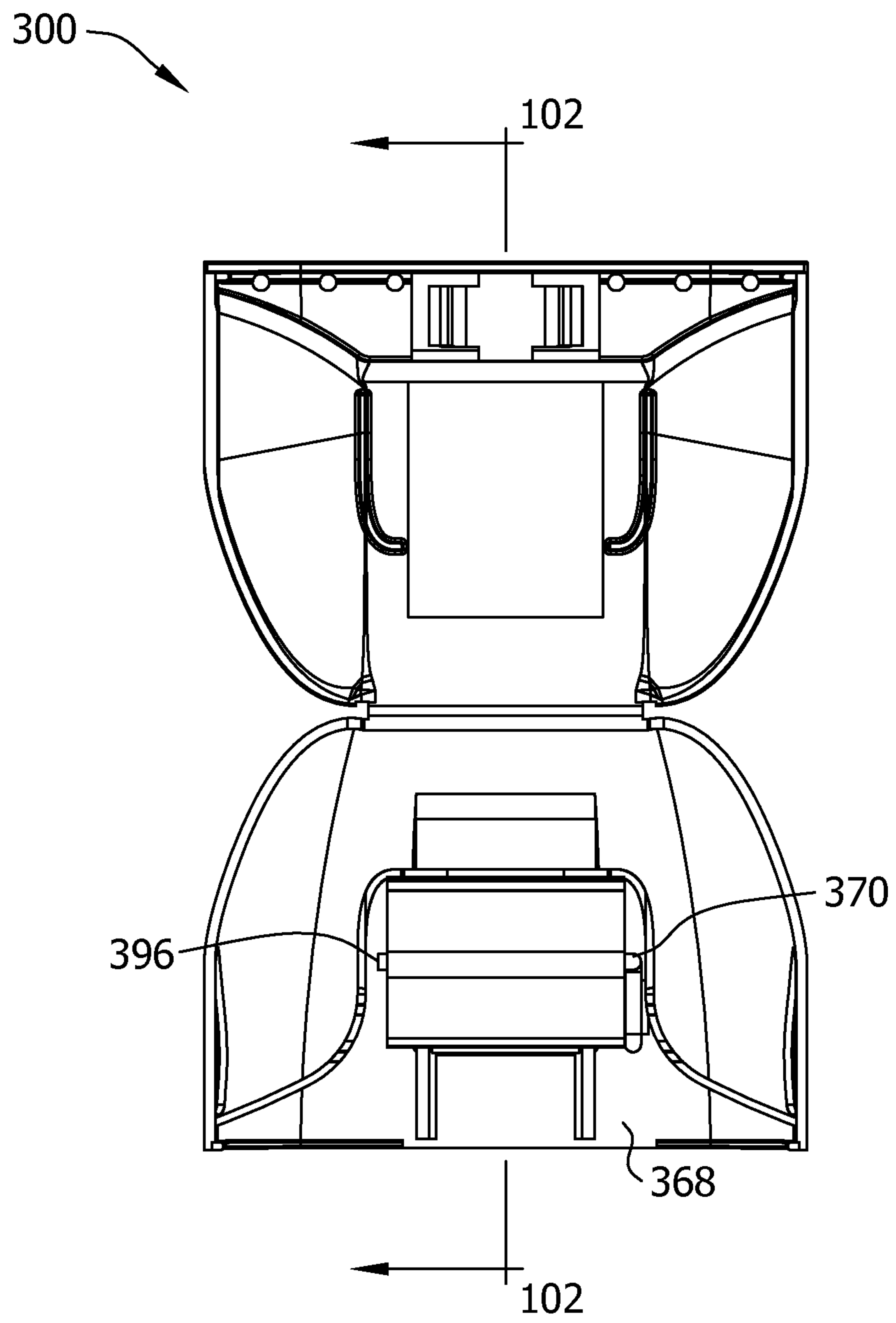
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FIG. 100



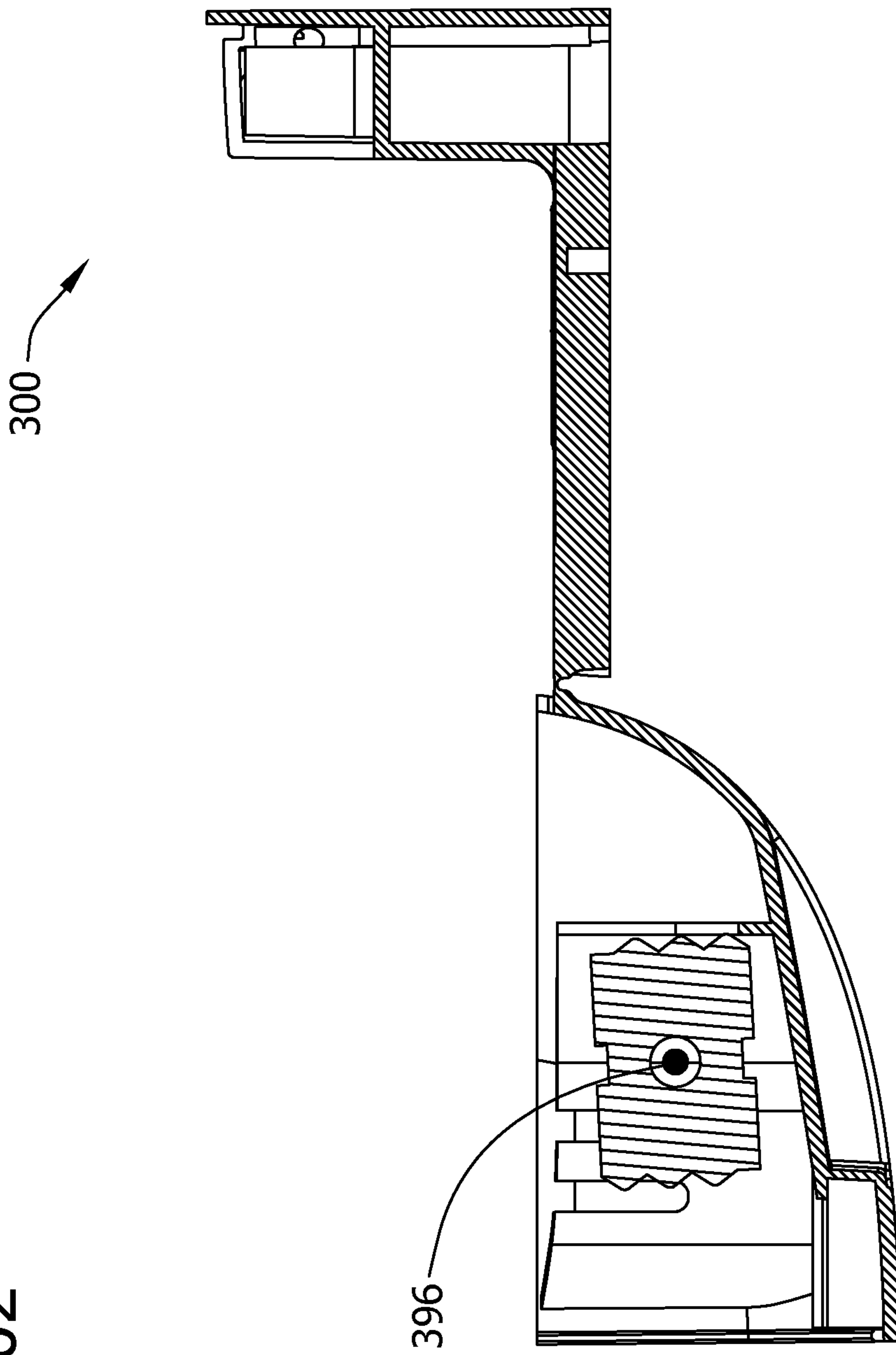
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FIG. 101

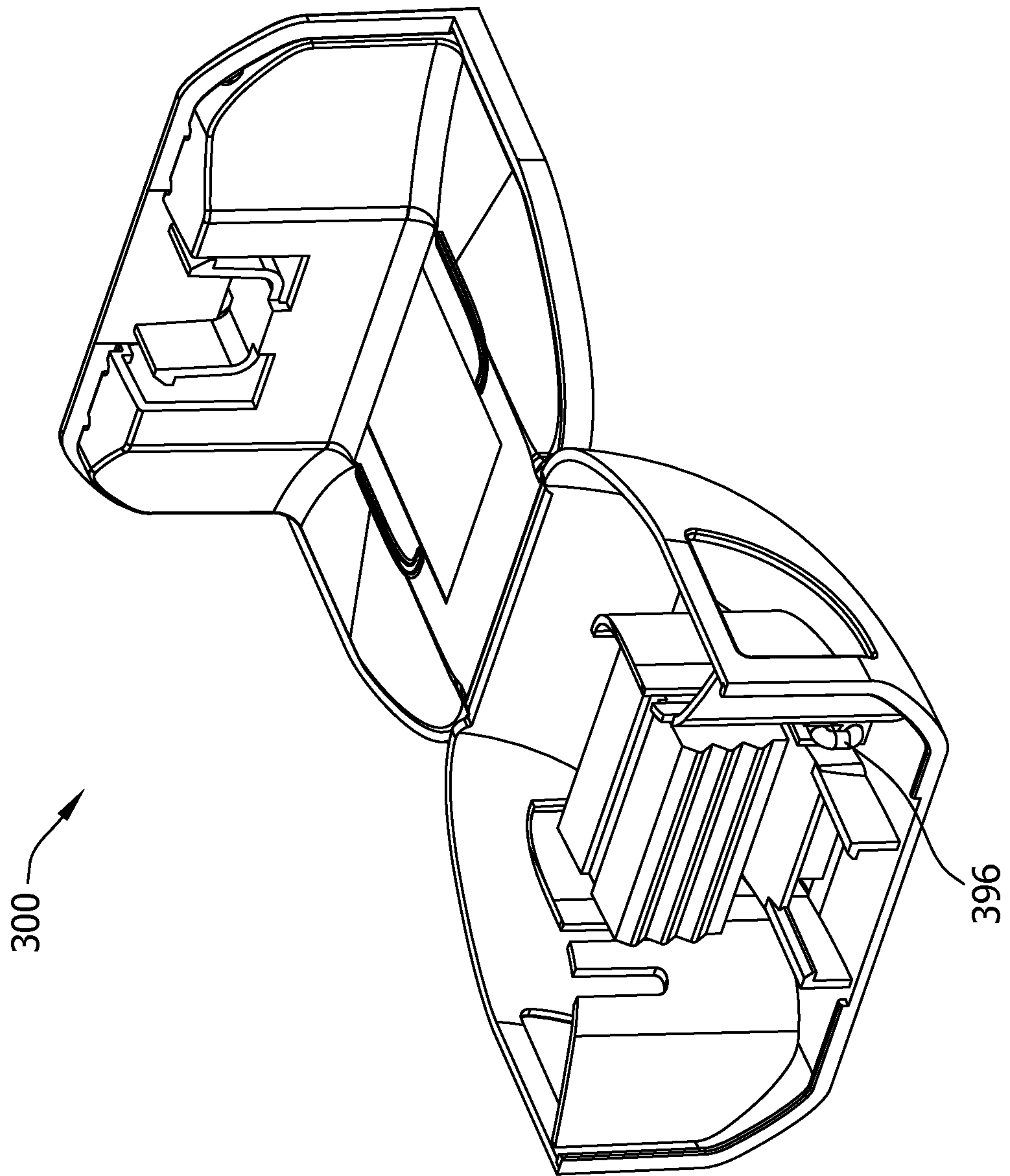


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FIG. 102



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FIG. 104

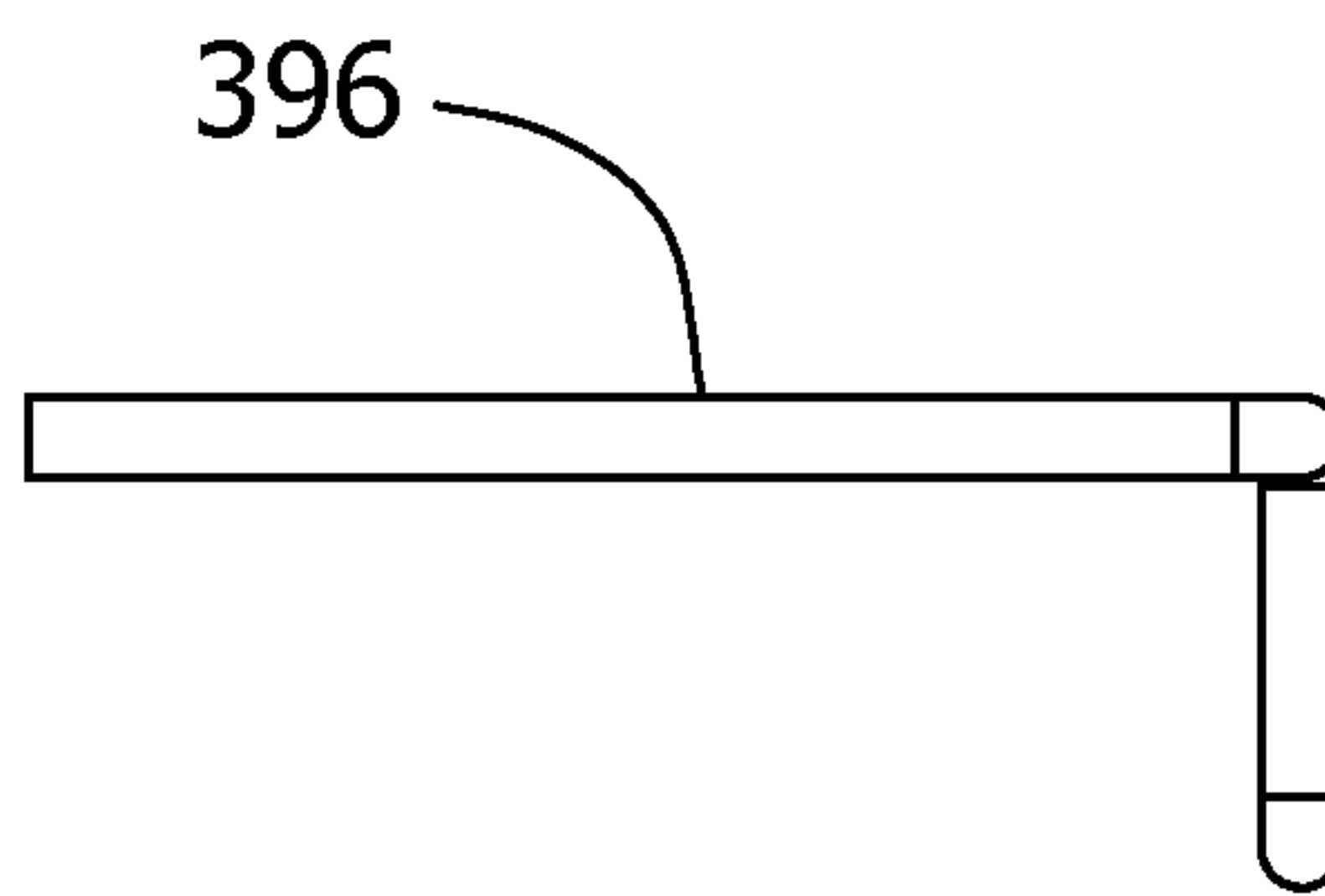
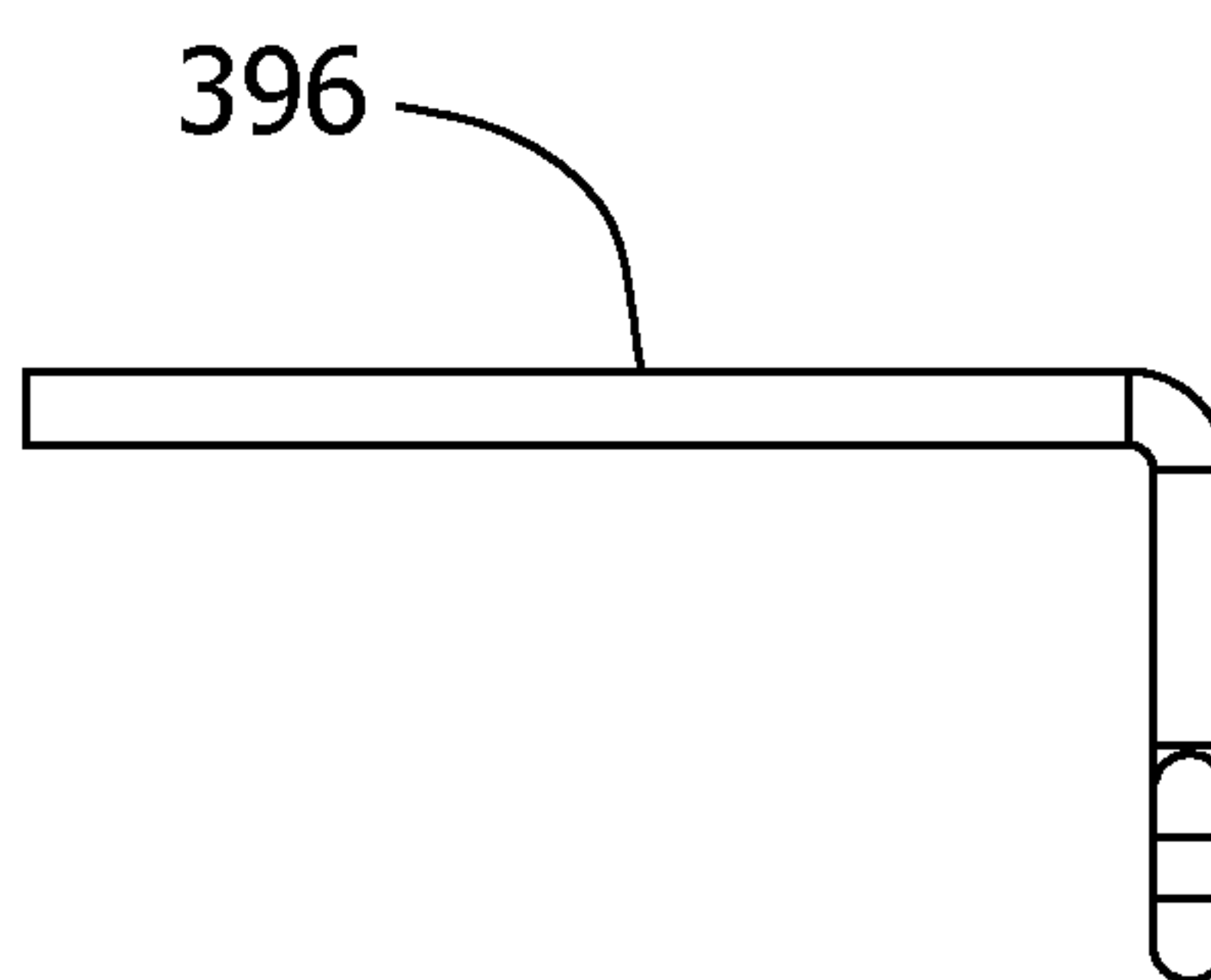


FIG. 105



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FIG. 106

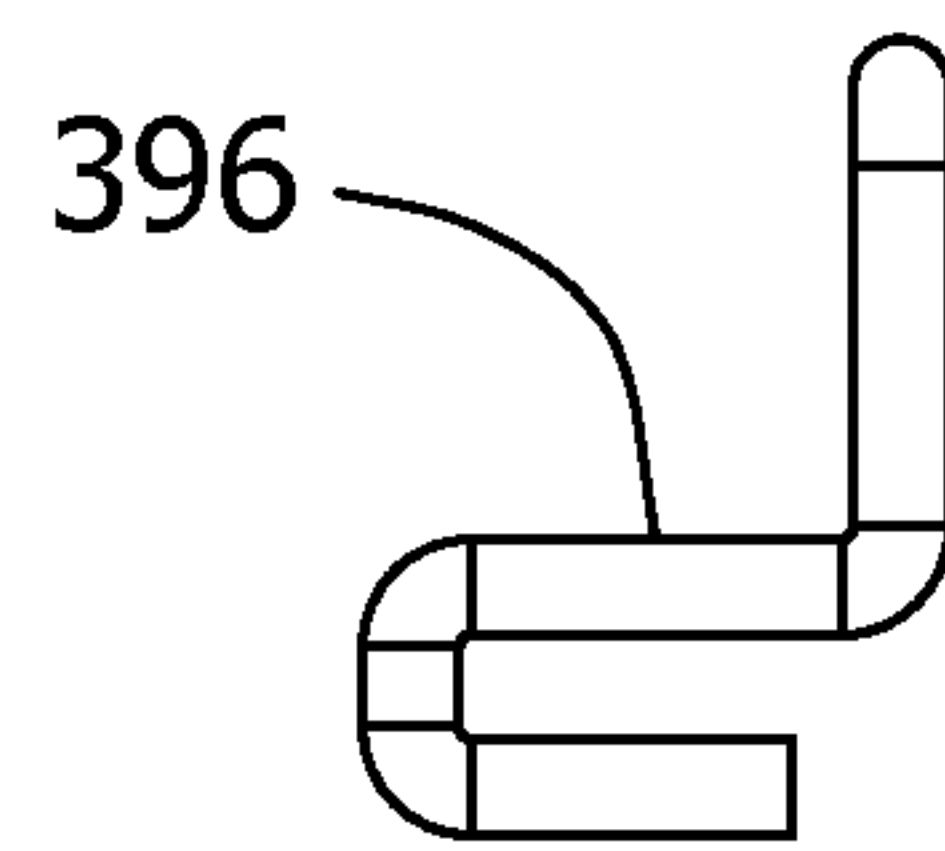
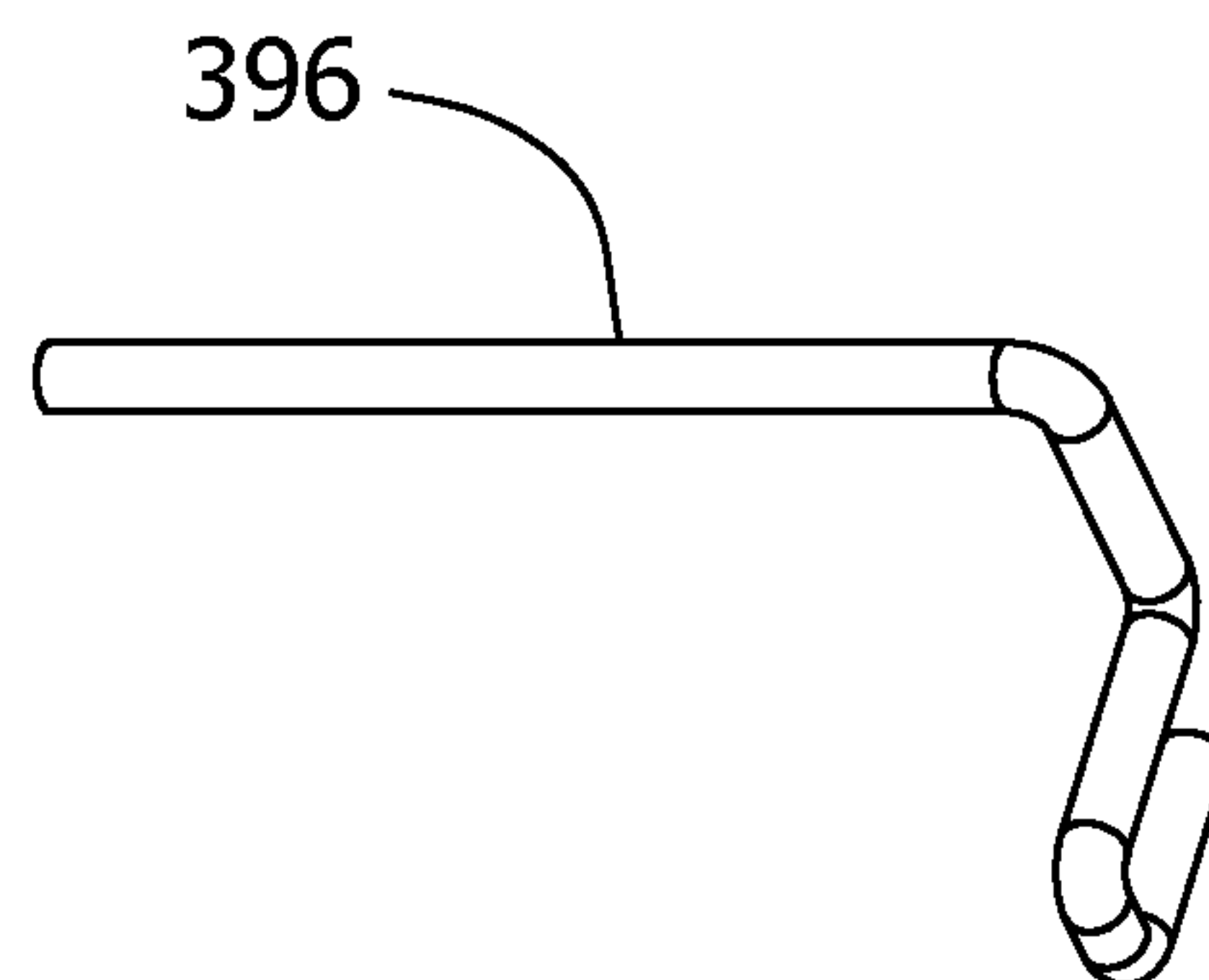


FIG. 107



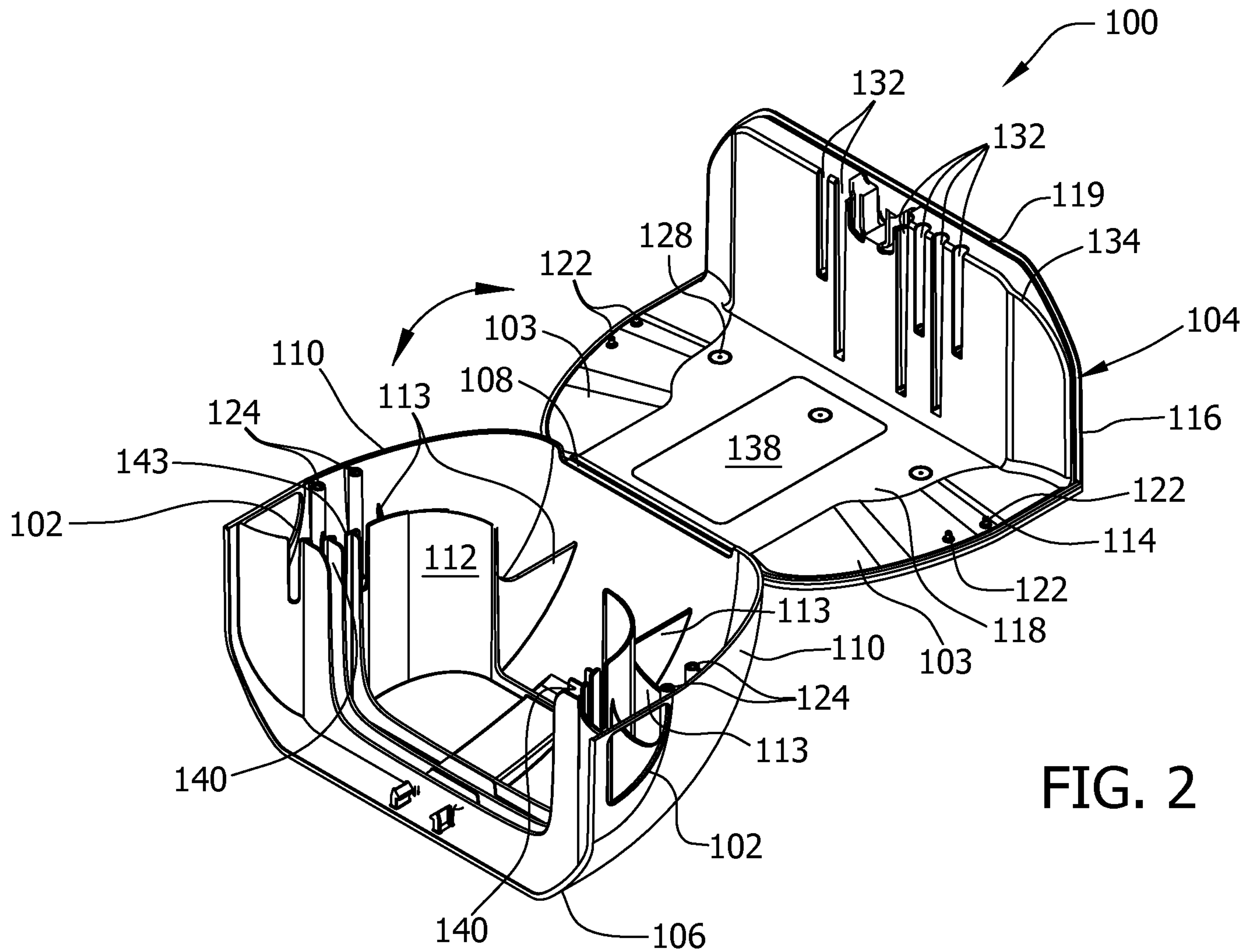


FIG. 2