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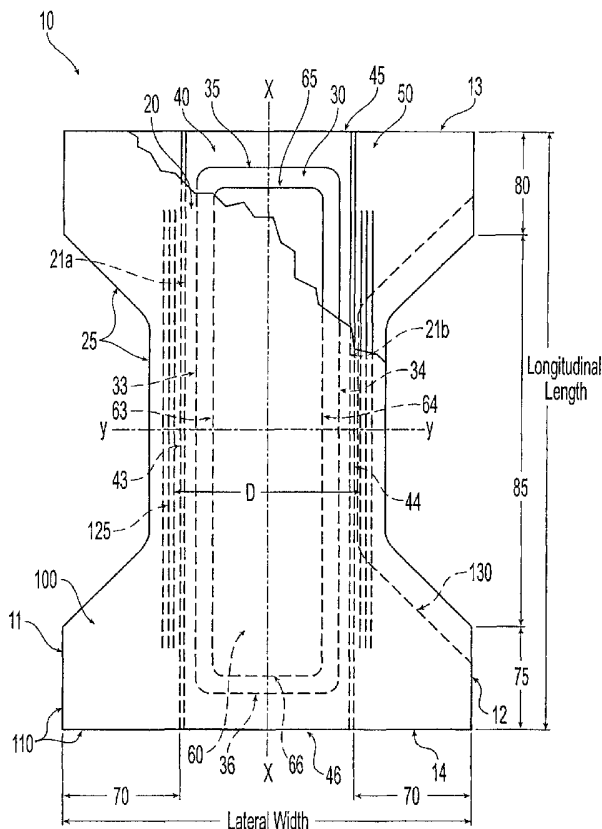
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: DIAPER DESIGN HAVING ZONES OF REDUCED STIFFNESS AND CONTINUOUS BREATHABILITY



(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to an absorbent, article, such as a disposable diaper, comprising of a topsheet, barrier cuffs, an optional acquisition layer, an absorbent core, a barrier layer, and a backsheet. The diaper is arranged so as to create breathable zones of reduced stiffness surrounding to wearer's thighs. That is, the layers of material forming the diaper are arranged so the area surrounding the wearer's thighs includes only the backsheet, barrier cuffs and leg elastics. No liquid-impervious material is present within the breathable zones of reduced stiffness. Furthermore, these breathable zones of reduced stiffness preferably are formed so that only hydrophobic material is present. Thus, the present invention provides a better fitting, less irritating absorbent article by reducing the stiffness and increasing the breathability of the diaper in the area surrounding the wearer's thighs, resulting in increase comfort and fit around the wearer's thighs.

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B. FIELDS SEARCHED

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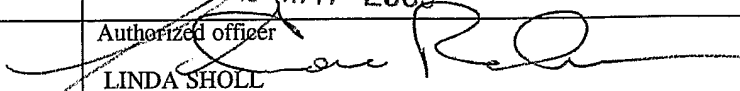
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,624,424 A (SAISAKA ET AL.) 29 April 1997, see entire document.	1-48
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Y		11, 26, 32-48
A	US 5,476,458 A (GLAUG ET AL.) 19 December 1995, see entire document.	
A	US 5,674,215 A (RONNBERG) 07 October 1997, see entire document.	
A, P	US 6,648,867 B2 (MINATO ET AL.) 18 November 2003, see entire document.	
A	US 2001/0003153 A1 (SAYAMA ET AL.) 07 June 2001, see entire document.	

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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