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(54) **MATERNITY GARMENT WITH DOUBLE WAISTBAND DESIGN**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A double waistband for use on a maternity garment that can be worn at all stages of a pregnancy is described. The waistband has a lower component which has an outer surface and an inner surface. The outer surface is made of a fabric having a low degree of stretchiness or flexibility. The inner surface is made of a fabric having a high degree of stretchiness. The other part of the double waistband is an upper waistband component which is made of a flexible fabric. The upper and lower waistband components are connected or sewn together to form a contiguous single waistband. The outer surface of the lower waistband component is a stretch-woven fabric and the inner surface of the lower waistband is a knit fabric. The upper waistband component can be made from a jersey knit fabric. The lower waistband goes around a woman's waist at the same location as would the waistband of a normal pair of pants. The garment waistband can be used as part of a maternity pant, a maternity skirt, or any other maternity garment that uses a waistband.

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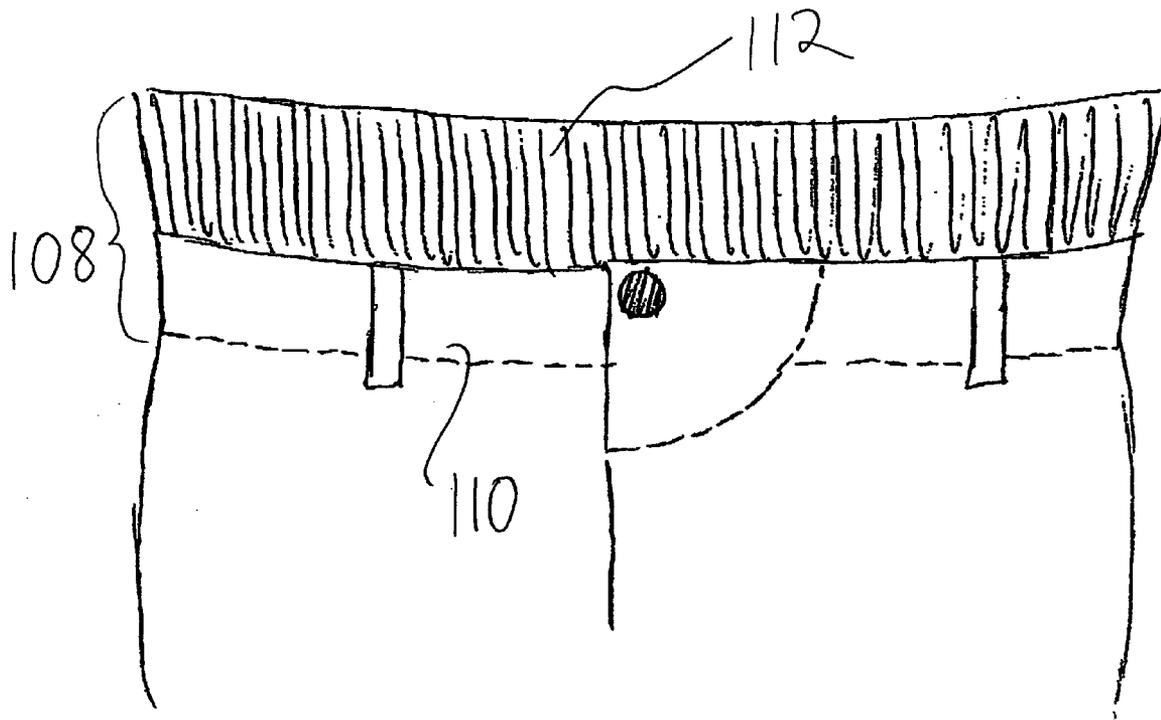


FIG. 1A

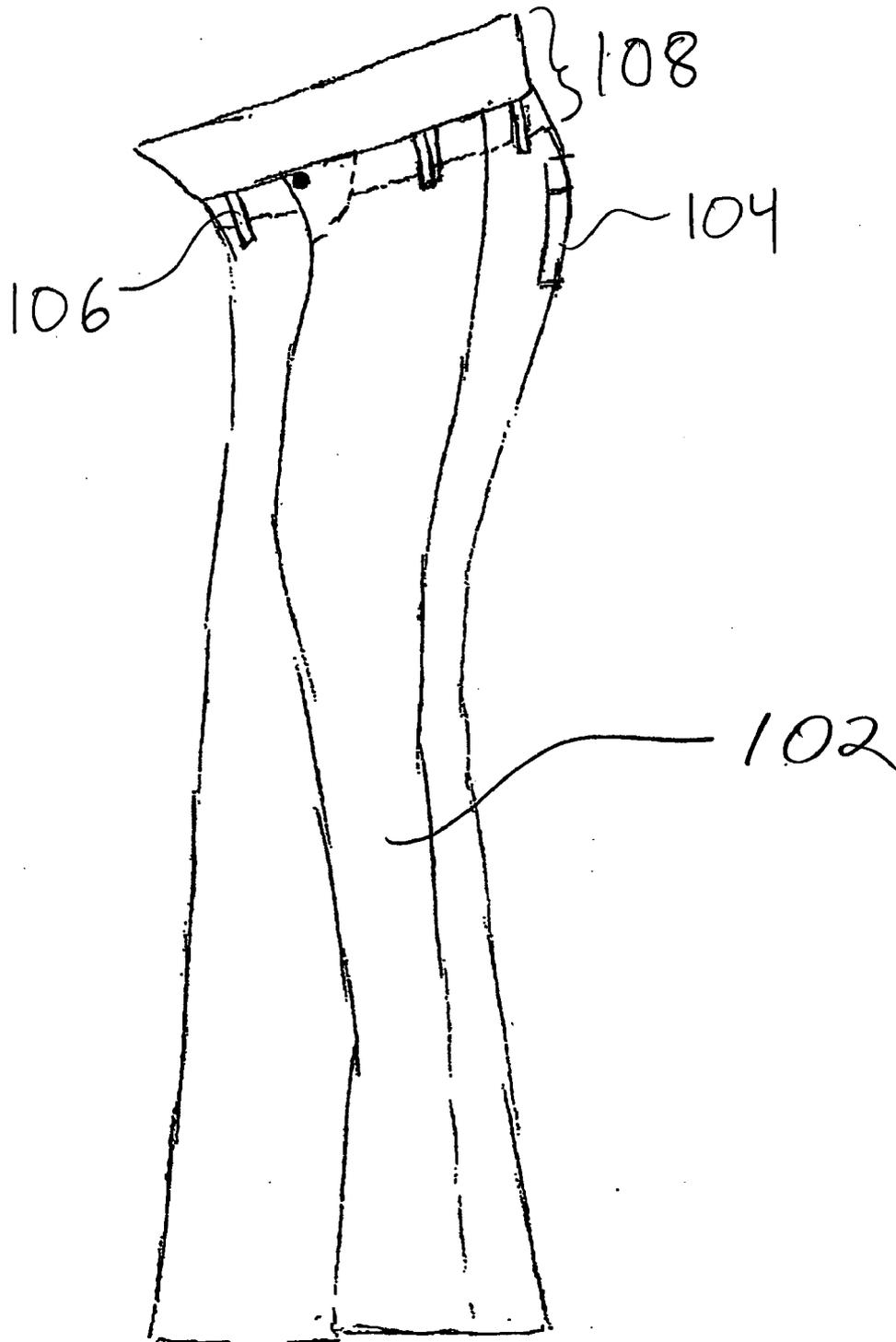


FIG. 1B

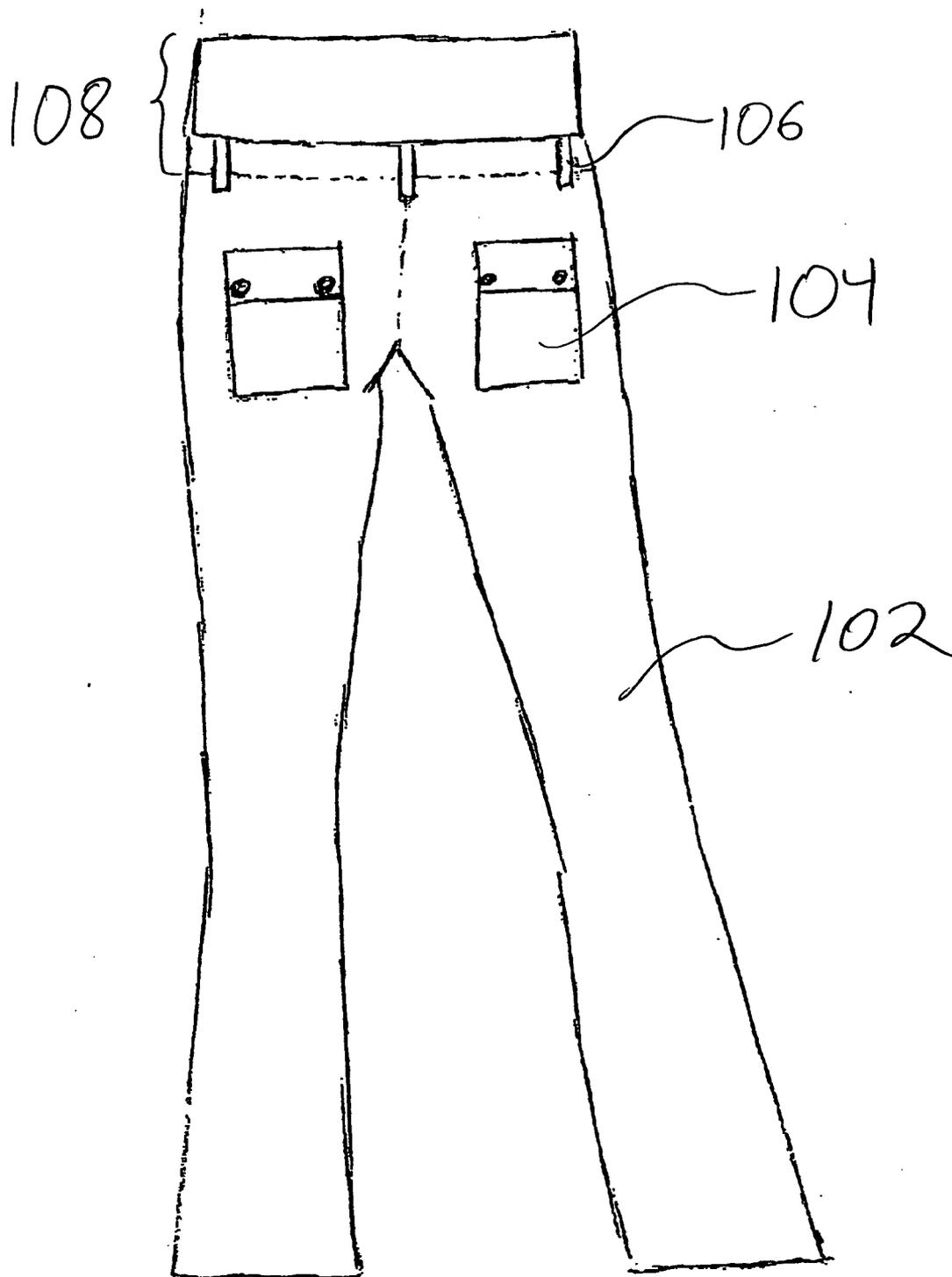


FIG. 1C

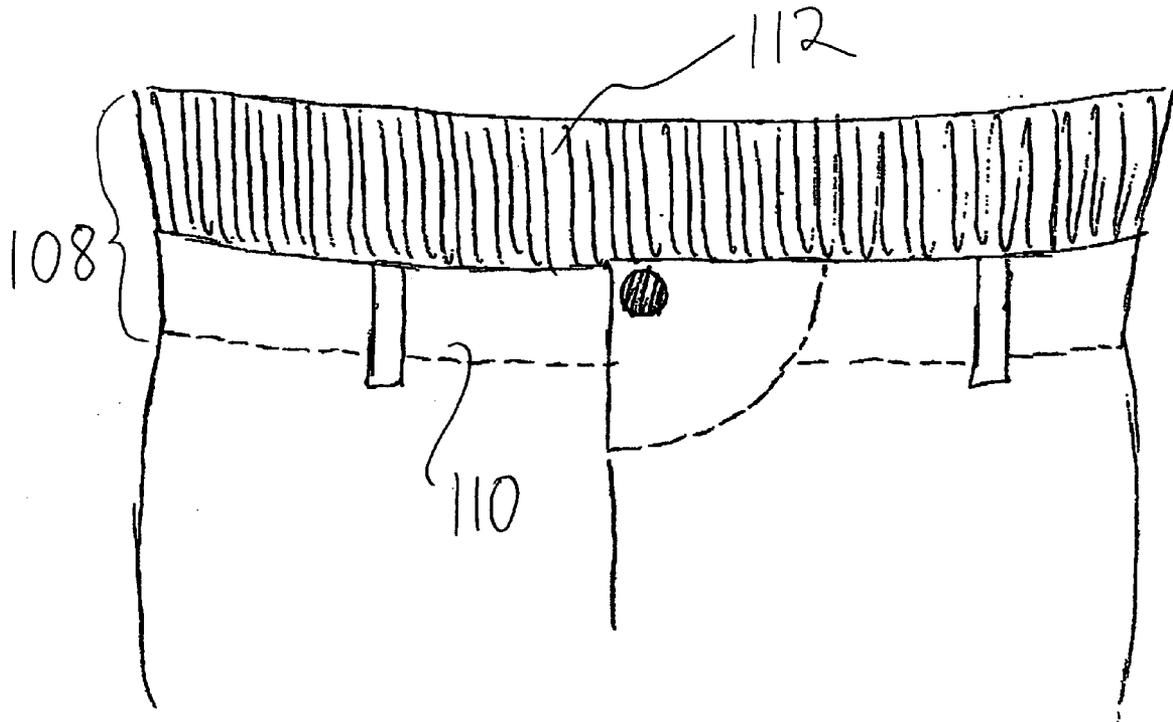
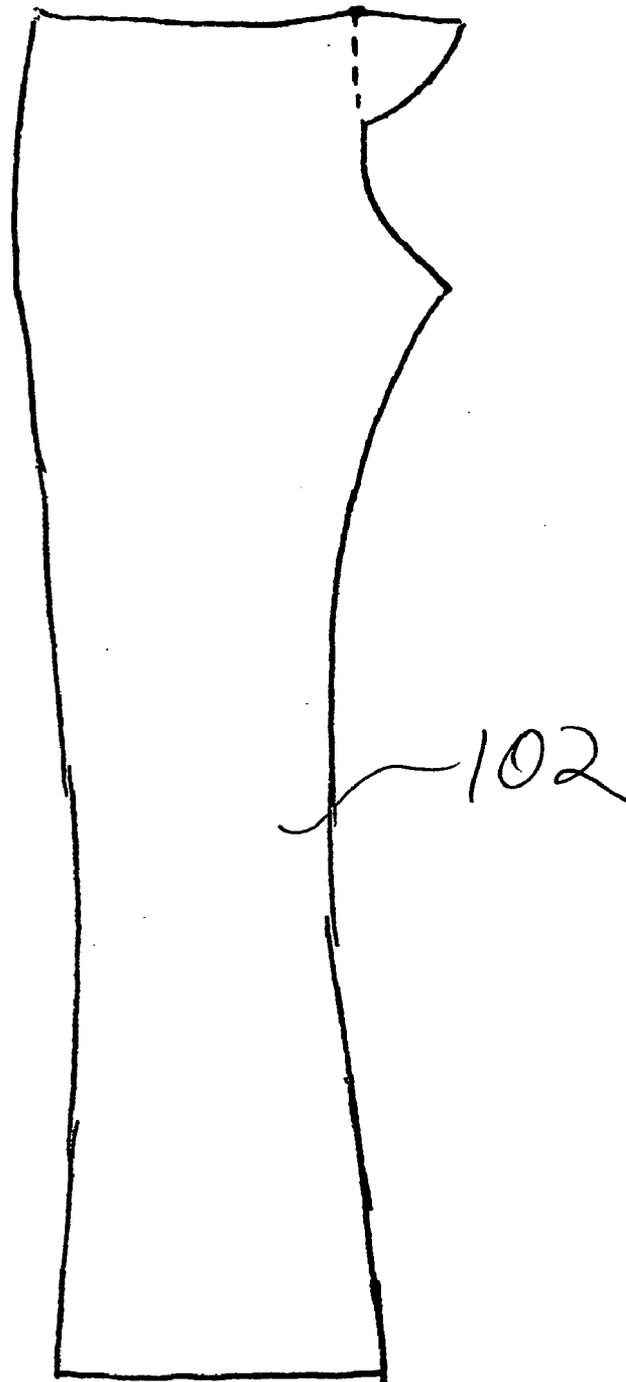


FIG. 2A



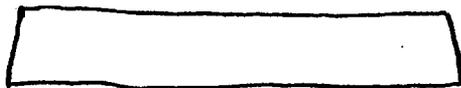


FIG. 4A

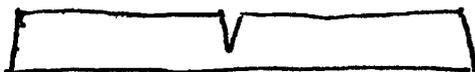


FIG. 3A

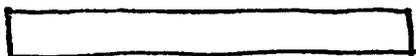


FIG. 5A

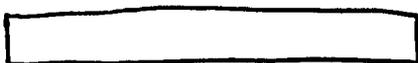


FIG. 5B

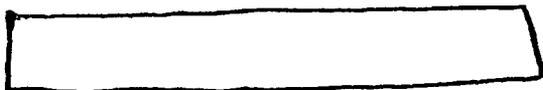
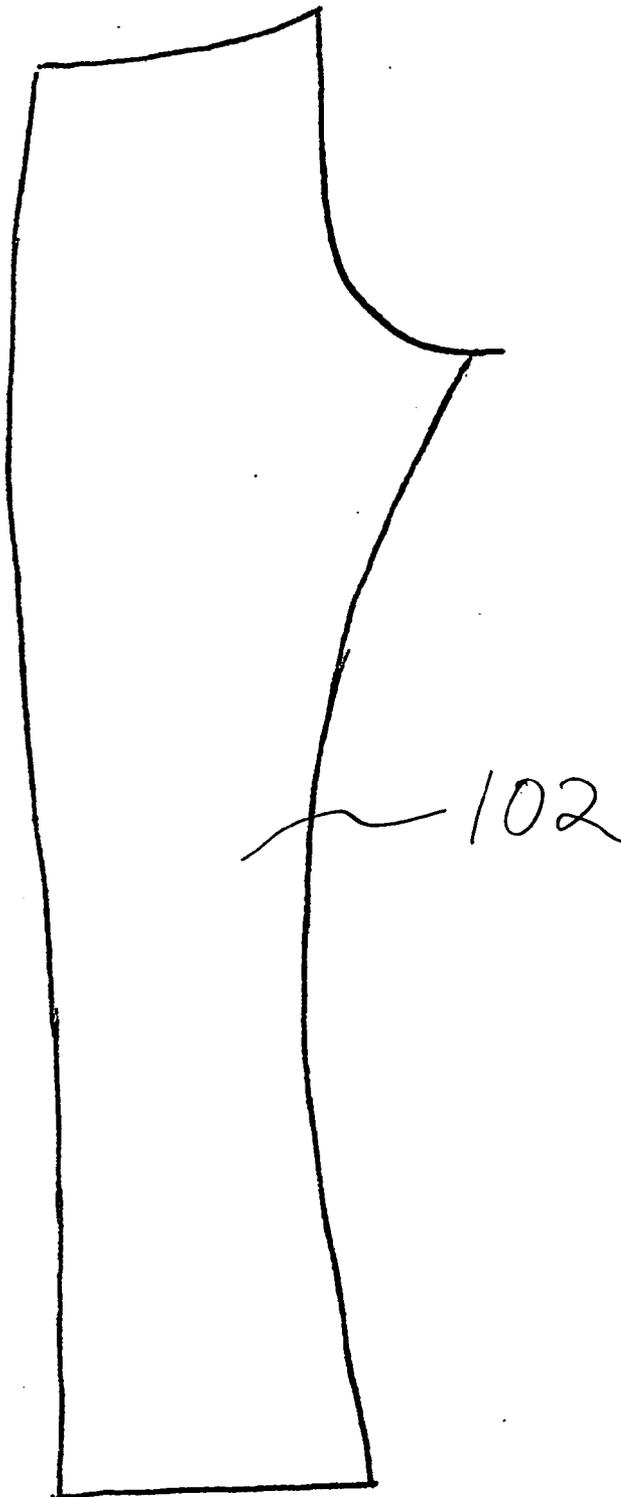


FIG. 6



FIG. 2B

FIG. 2C



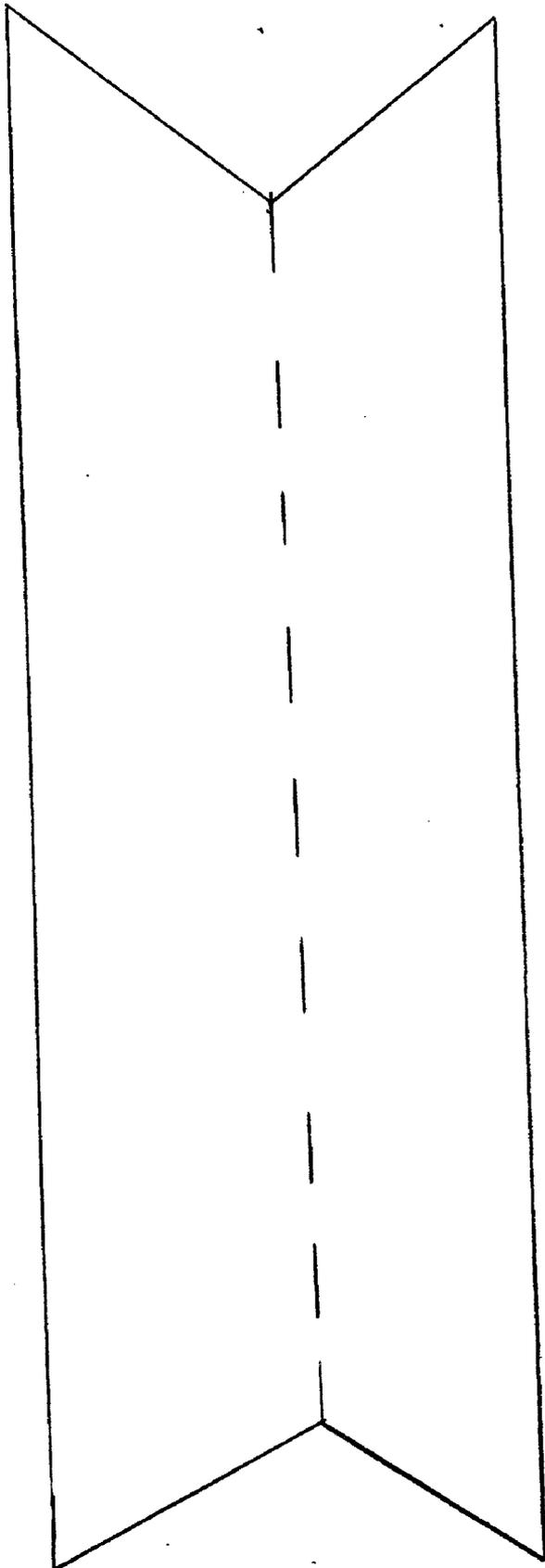


FIG. 3B

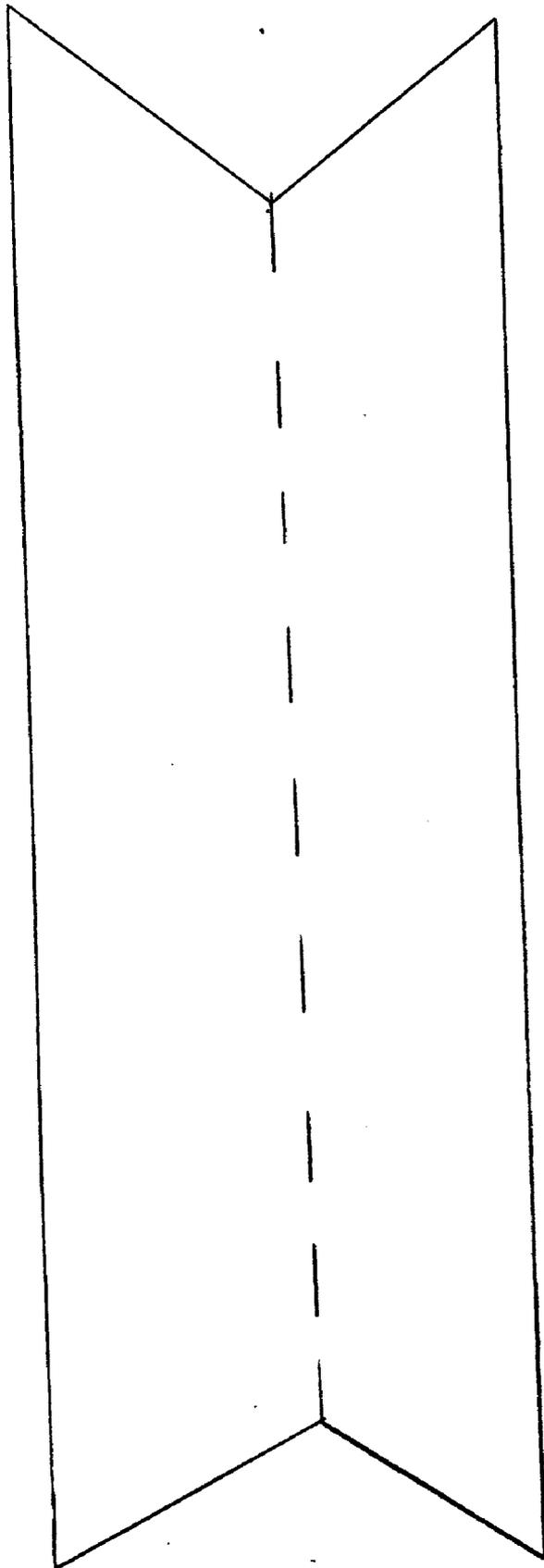


FIG. 4B

FIG. 7A

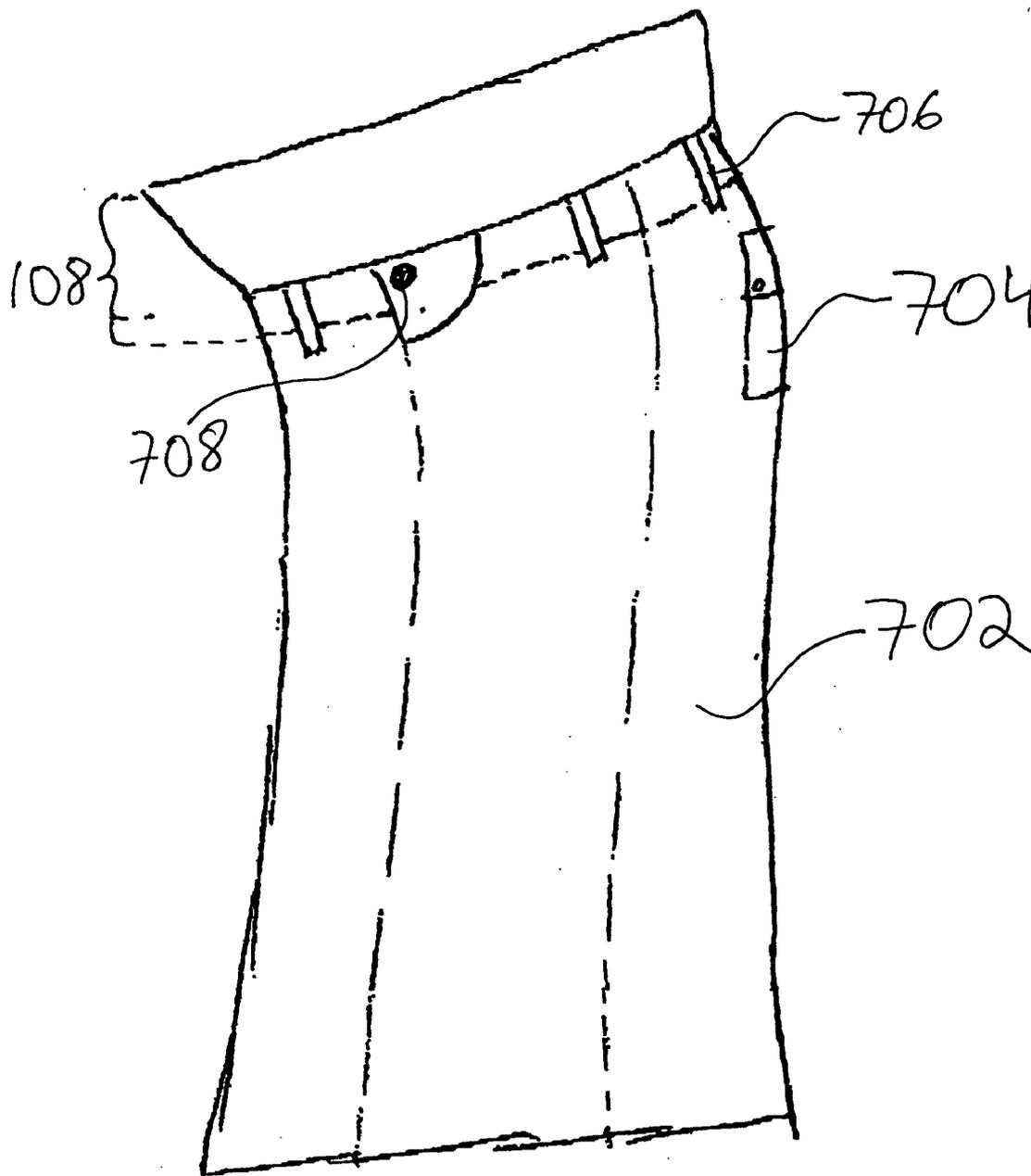
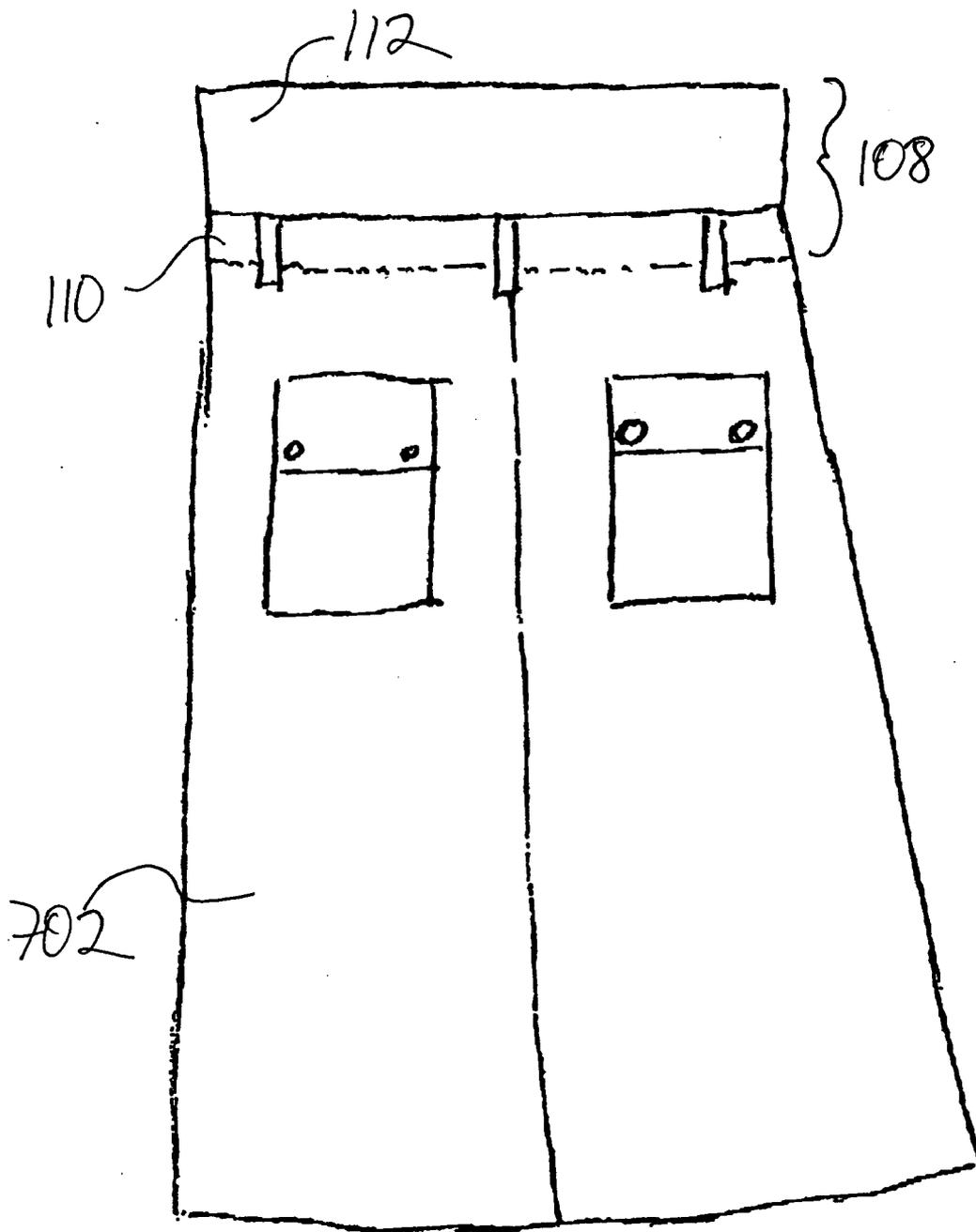


FIG. 7B



MATERNITY GARMENT WITH DOUBLE WAISTBAND DESIGN

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0001] Reference will now be made in detail to a preferred embodiment of the present invention. An example of the preferred embodiment is illustrated in the accompanying figures. While the invention will be described in conjunction with a preferred embodiment, it will be understood that it is not intended to limit the invention to one preferred embodiment. To the contrary, the preferred embodiment and the description are intended to cover alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention, as defined by the appended claims.

[0002] In accordance with one embodiment of the present invention, a maternity pant has two waistband components that are sewn together to form a contiguous double waistband for a maternity pant. Although the two waistbands are sewn together, they have the appearance of being two separate waistbands.

[0003] A first waistband component finishes the pant and makes the maternity pant look like a normal pair of pants. A second waistband component is elastic and is able to accommodate a woman's stomach as it grows but also allows the pant to be worn comfortably when the woman's stomach is still in the early stages of pregnancy. The two waistband components are sewn together forming essentially a single waistband that has the functionality of two waistbands.

[0004] The first/lower waistband component of the double waistband design of the present invention appears similar to the waistband of a non-maternity pant. However, certain adjustments have been made to the first waistband component, which differentiate the overall design of the maternity pant of the present invention from a non-maternity pant. These adjustments allow the pants to 'give' more in the waist than non-maternity pants.

[0005] Described in the figures a maternity pant designed to be worn comfortably by a pregnant woman at all stages of pregnancy and has the appearance of a normal, non-maternity pant.

[0006] FIG. 1A is a partial frontal/side view of a maternity pant designed in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. FIG. 1B is a rear view of a maternity pant designed in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. The pant has a normal leg portion 102 that can be cut or designed according to a desired style. Leg portion 102 may have typical, known features such as front and back pockets, a zipper, buttons and various other features that have utility or are purely stylistic. In FIG. 1B leg portion 102 has back pockets 104 and belt loops 106. Directly above leg portion 102 is a double waistband component 108 of the maternity pant.

[0007] FIG. 1C is a frontal view of a double waistband component 108 comprised of a non-elastic or woven portion and an elastic portion in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Double waistband component 108, as shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B, has a non-elastic portion 110 that has the appearance of a waistband for a normal pair of pants with belt loops, 'fly', and so on. FIG. 5A is an outline of the back portion of non-elastic portion 110. FIG. 5B is an outline of the front portion of non-elastic waistband 110.

Non-elastic portion 110 can be made from any appropriate woven material normally used for a waistband on normal, non-maternity pants. In one embodiment, non-elastic portion 110 is comprised from stretch-woven fabric. Non-elastic portion 110 sits at the normal height on a woman's waist as would the waistband of a non-maternity pant. FIG. 6 is a frontal view of a belt-loop strap that may be sewn to non-elastic portion 110.

[0008] Elastic portion 112 of double waistband component 108 is sewn above non-elastic portion 110. In one embodiment, elastic portion 112 rises about four inches from the upper border of non-elastic portion 110. Although the height of the elastic portion can vary without changing the novel concept of the double waistband design of the maternity pant, a five or six-inch elastic portion 112 may rise too high and a three-inch elastic portion may be too low on the stomach rendering portion 112 uncomfortable for most pregnant woman. In a preferred embodiment, elastic portion 112 is comprised of jersey knit fabric which is capable of stretching more than woven fabric.

[0009] FIG. 3A is an outline of the back of elastic portion 112. FIG. 3B is an outline of an unfolded back portion of a cloth cover for elastic portion 112 as shown in FIG. 3A. FIG. 4A is an outline of the front of elastic portion 112. FIG. 4B is an outline of an unfolded front portion of a cloth cover for elastic portion 112 as shown in FIG. 4A.

[0010] The circumference of non-elastic portion 110 of double waistband design 108 is somewhat larger than that of elastic portion 112. This allows for the growth of a woman's stomach during the entire pregnancy. As the name implies, elastic portion 112 can stretch to accommodate a pregnant woman's stomach as it grows throughout all stages of pregnancy. As described in greater detail below, double waistband component 108 allows a pregnant woman to comfortably wear the same maternity pant from the time she can no longer wear normal pants up to the last stage of pregnancy as well as postpartum.

[0011] FIG. 2A is a frontal view of a fabric cut showing half of a maternity pant designed in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Leg portion 102 shown in FIGS. 1A and 1B is displayed separately in FIG. 2A. In a preferred embodiment, leg portion 102 is comprised of a woven fabric. FIG. 2B is an outline of a fabric cut showing a portion of material that lies underneath the fly portion of a maternity pant as shown in FIG. 2A. In a preferred embodiment, the material underlying the fly portion is a knit fabric. FIG. 2C is a rear view of a fabric cut showing half of a maternity pant designed in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

[0012] The lower, non-elastic portion 110 of double waistband component 108 provides for a woman's aesthetic needs, while upper, elastic portion 112 of double waistband component 108, which is connected to portion 110, accommodates the woman's growing stomach. Elastic portion 112 is part of the maternity pant but is covered by another garment, typically a shirt or top.

[0013] In a preferred embodiment, knit fabric of the same color is used on the inside of non-elastic portion 110 and behind the 'fly' portion as shown in FIG. 2B. A woven fabric is used in the rest of the garment. The outside of non-elastic portion 110 is made from a stretch-woven fabric. Knit fabric,

which typically stretches much more than woven fabric, allows lower, non-elastic portion **110** to expand to accommodate a growing stomach. A normal waistband as used on a non-maternity pant typically uses woven fabric in both the inside and outside of the waistband. Furthermore, a normal waistband uses a stiff “facing” fabric inside to give the waistband a higher degree of stiffness. Double waistband component **108** does not contain a “facing” and is thereby more elastic than a normal waistband. The maternity pant of the present invention also has a slightly larger waist than the waist of non-maternity pants. In a preferred embodiment, the maternity pant of the present invention is comprised of a stretch woven fabric, e.g., with Spandex or other elastic thread woven into the fabric. Without these adjustments the pant could not accommodate pregnancy growth and would become too tight around the lower abdomen.

[0014] Finally, although the maternity garment of the present invention has been described as a pant, the double waistband component **108** described above can be used with any other maternity garment that requires support around the waistline. For example, another garment in which the waistband component can be used is a maternity skirt. **FIG. 7A** is a side view of a maternity skirt a skirt portion **702** with a pocket **704**, belt loops **706**, and a button waist fastener **708** having double waistband component **108** with elastic and non-elastic portions. **FIG. 7B** is a rear view of a maternity skirt having skirt portion **702** and double waistband component **108**, with lower, non-elastic waistband **110** and upper, elastic waistband **112**. The same novel concepts of the double waistband component **108** described above with respect to the maternity pant apply to the use of the waistband component **108** on a skirt.

[0015] Although the foregoing invention has been described in some detail for purposes of clarity of understanding, it will be apparent that certain changes and modifications may be practiced within the scope of the appended claims. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are alternative ways of implementing both the process and apparatus of the present invention. Accordingly, the present embodiments are to be considered as illustrative and not restrictive, and the invention is not to be limited to the details

given herein, but may be modified within the scope and equivalents of the appended claims.

1. A garment waistband that allows a single garment to be worn by a pregnant woman at all stages of pregnancy, the garment waistband comprising:

a first waistband component having an outer surface and an inner surface, the outer surface being made of a fabric having a low degree of stretchiness and the inner surface being made of a fabric having a high degree of stretching; and

a second waistband component being made of an elastic fabric;

wherein the first waistband component and the second waistband component are connected to form a contiguous single waistband.

2. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the first waistband component outer surface is a stretch-woven fabric.

3. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the first waistband component inner surface is a knit fabric.

4. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the second waistband component is made from a jersey knit fabric.

5. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the first waistband component goes around a woman’s waist at the same location as would the waistband of a normal pair of pants.

6. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the second waistband component does not appear to be connected to the first waistband component.

7. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the circumference of the first waistband component is greater than the circumference of the second waistband component.

8. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the waistband is used on a maternity pant.

9. A garment waistband as recited in claim 1 wherein the waistband is used on a maternity skirt.

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