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(54) **APPLIANCE CONSOLE ASSEMBLY**

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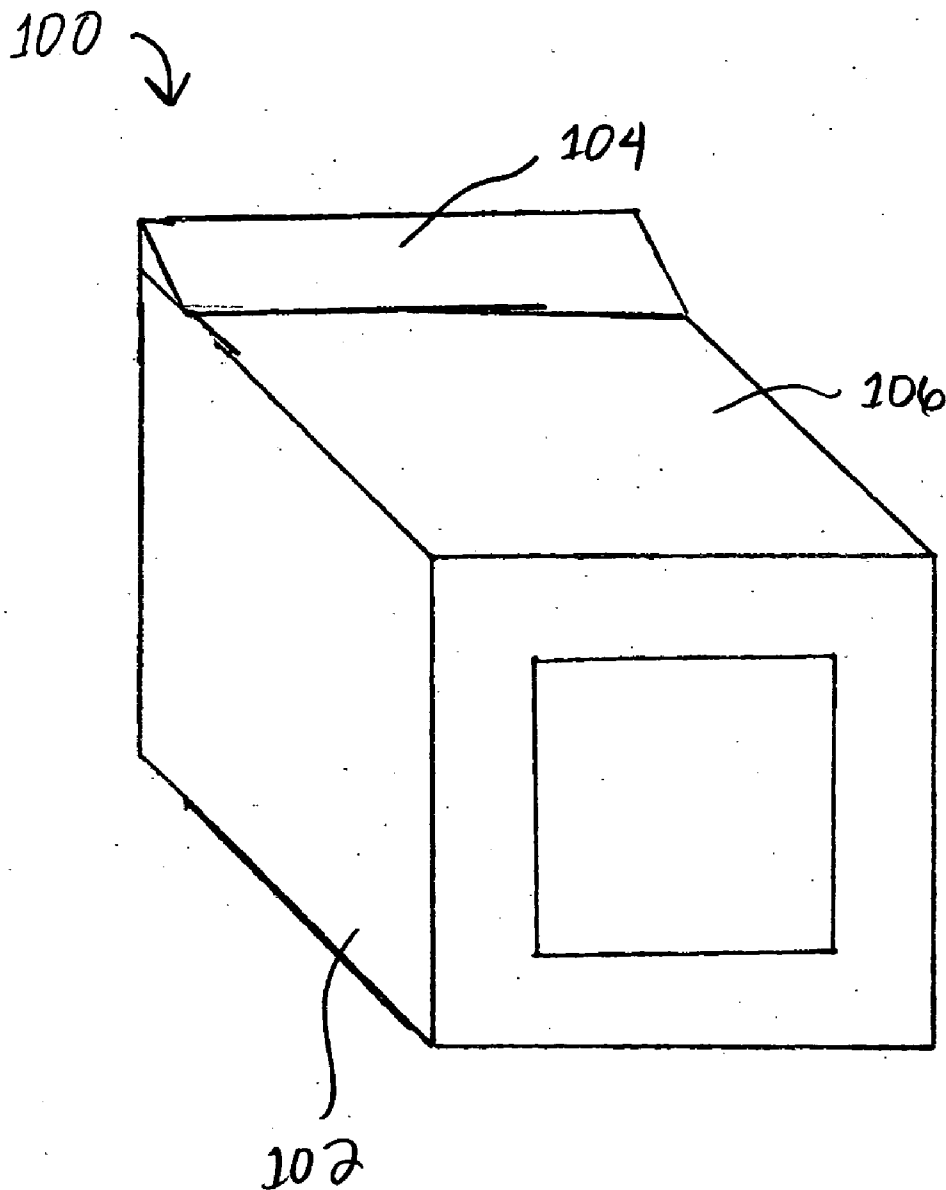
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A console assembly for an appliance that includes a cabinet is provided. The console assembly has a console which attaches with a top surface of the appliance cabinet and a rear peg. The console includes a passageway disposed in a surface thereof. The rear peg, which is a structure independent of the console, projects upward from a surface associated with the appliance cabinet and through the console passageway. The console may include one or more flanges disposed at a front edge of the console, a pair of front pegs and a pair of posts proximate to the front pegs.

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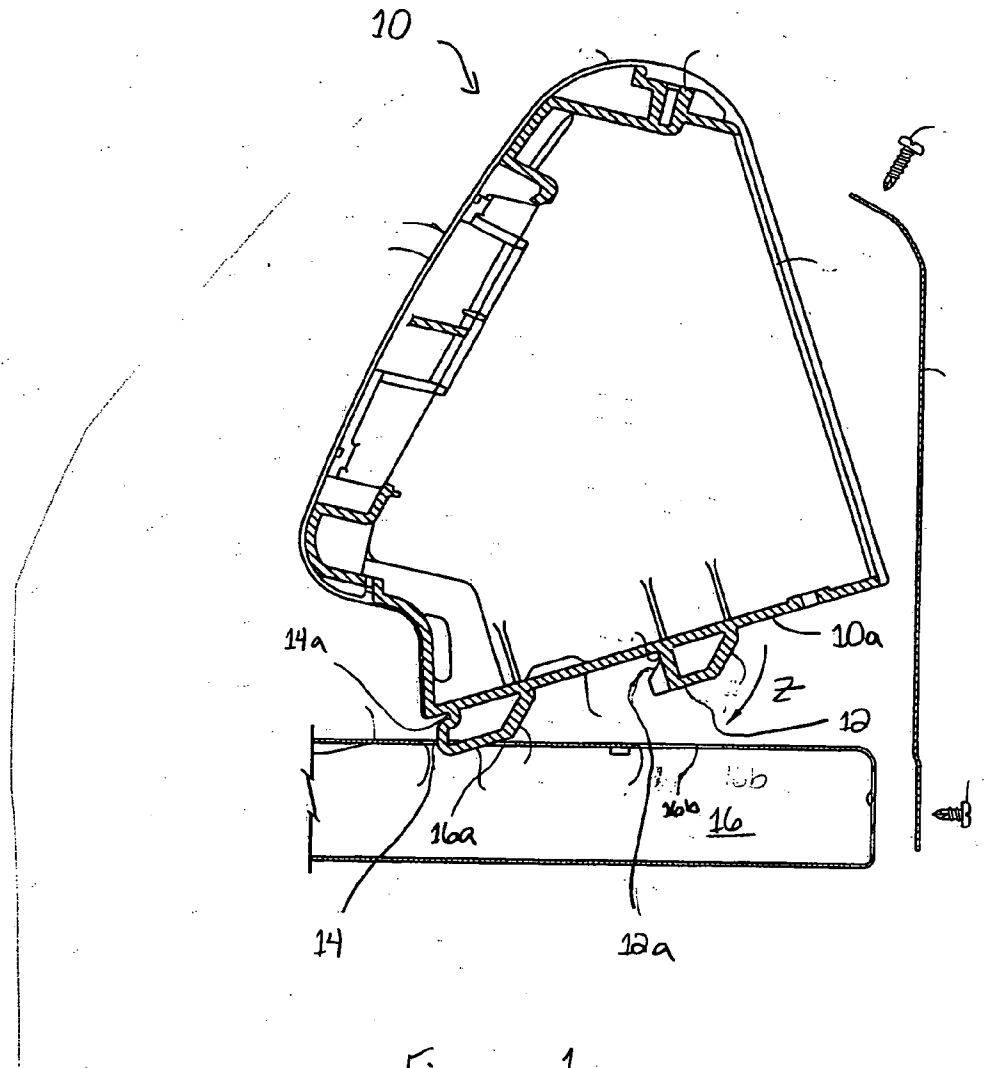


Figure 1
(Related Art)

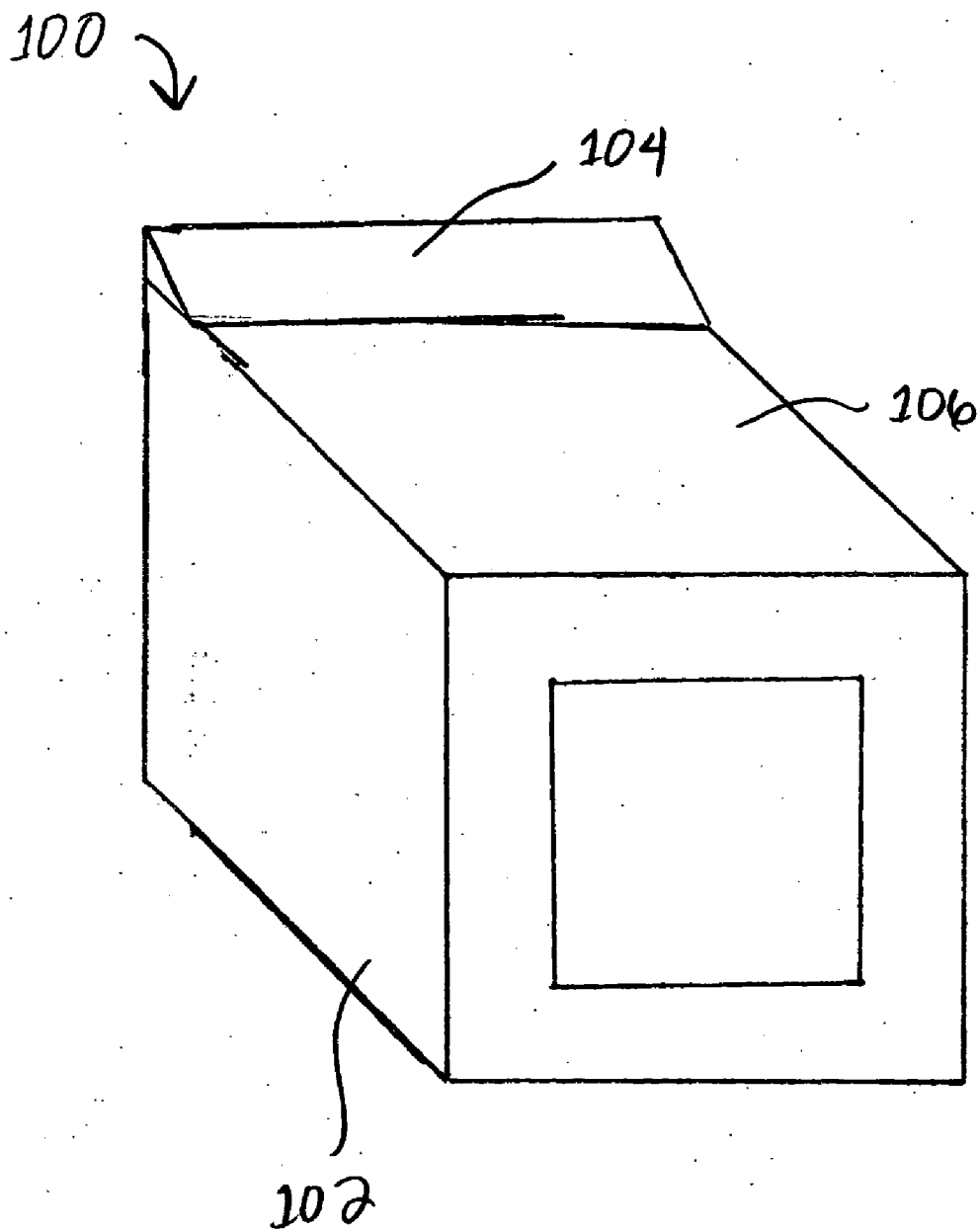


Figure 2

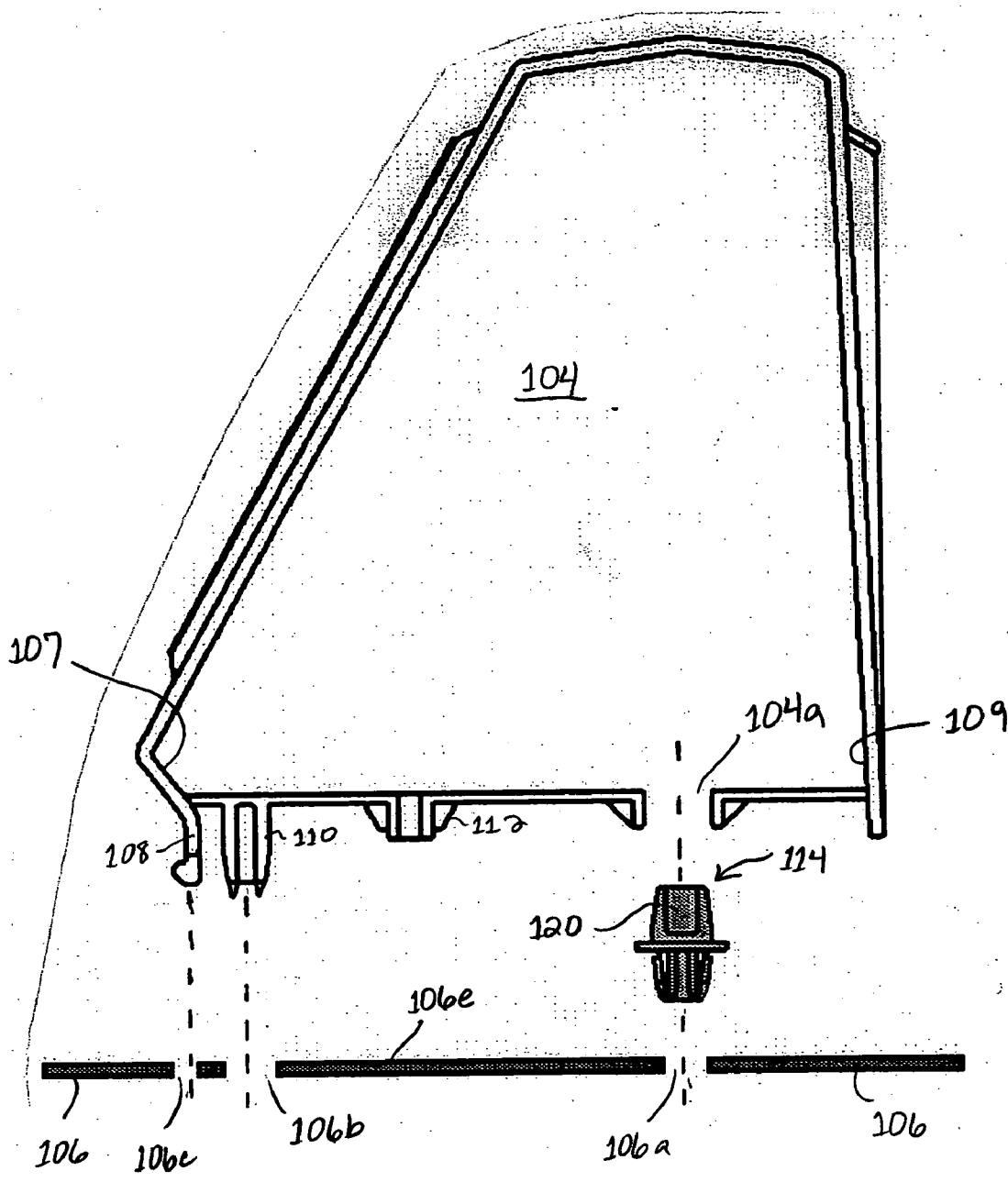


Figure 3

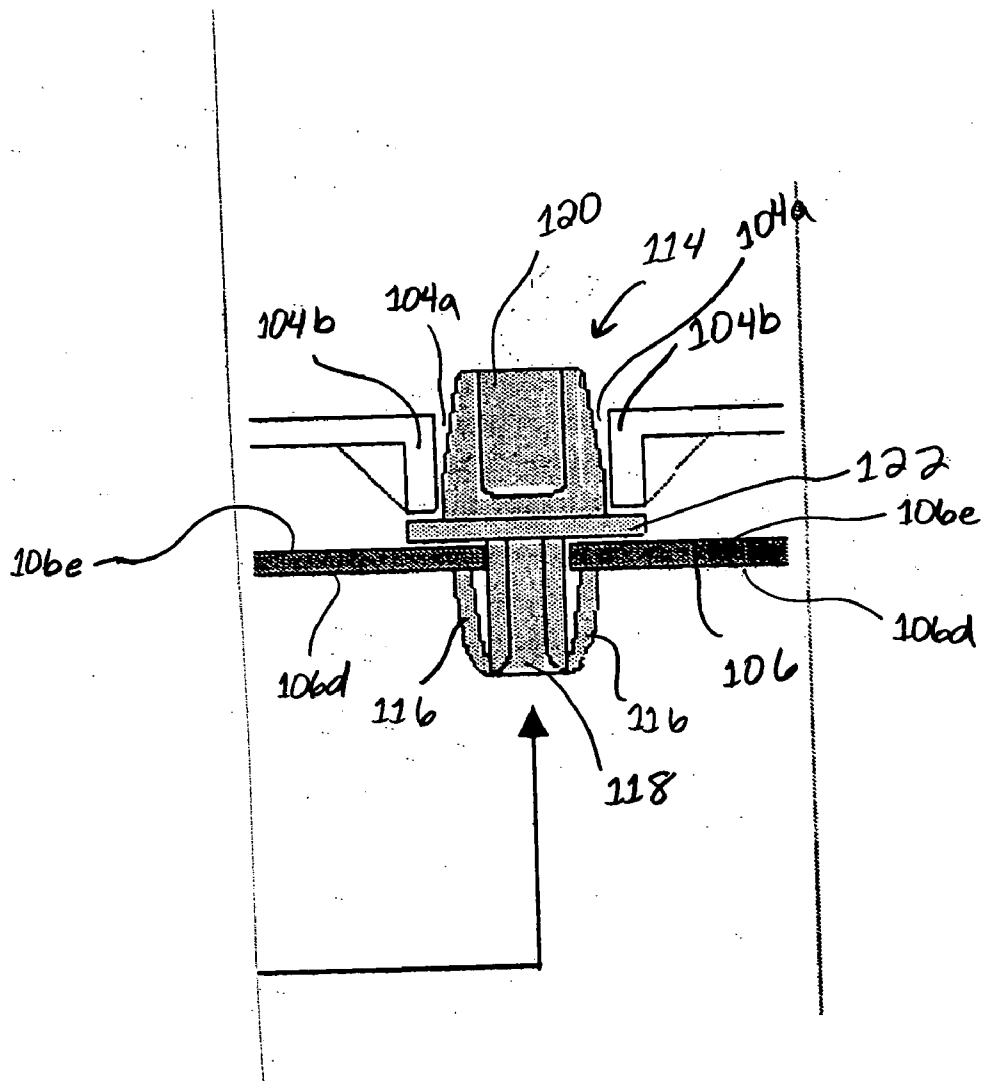


Figure 4

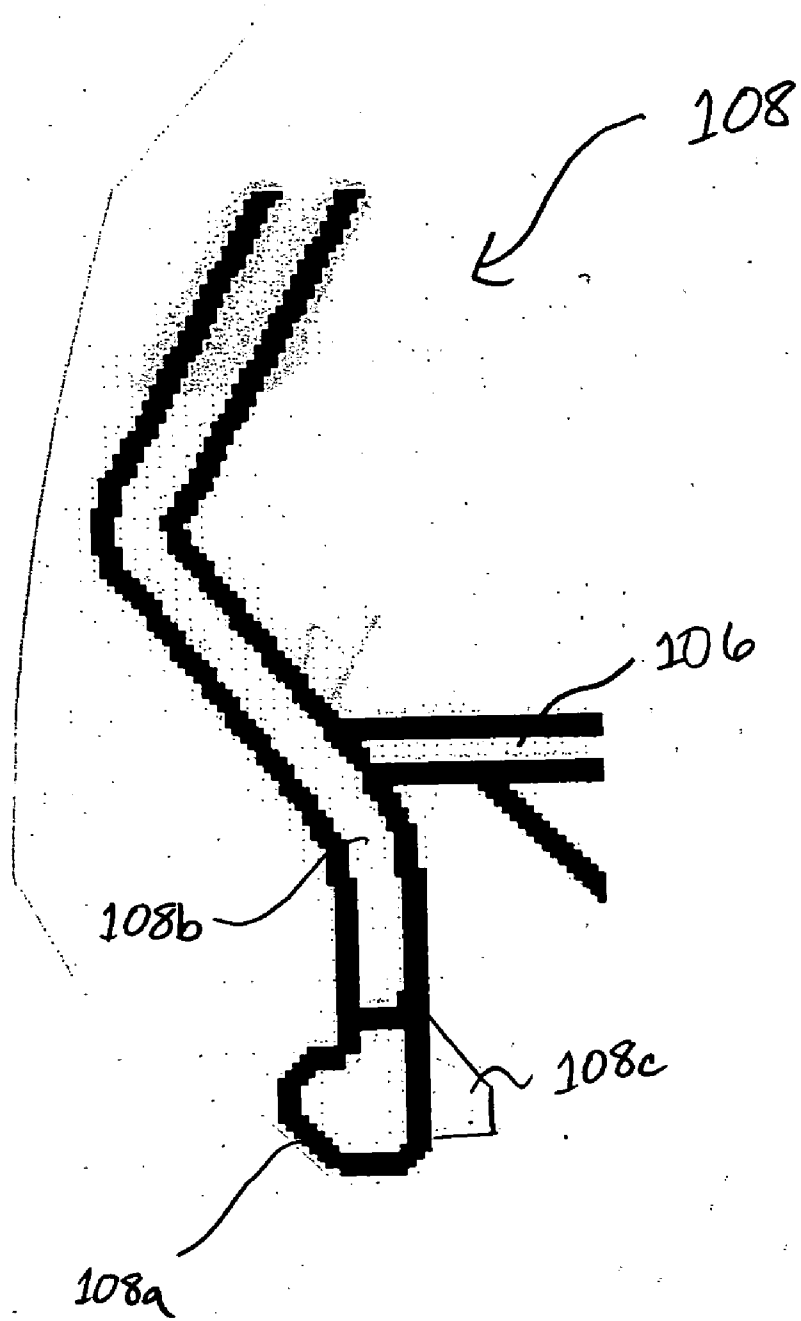


Figure 5

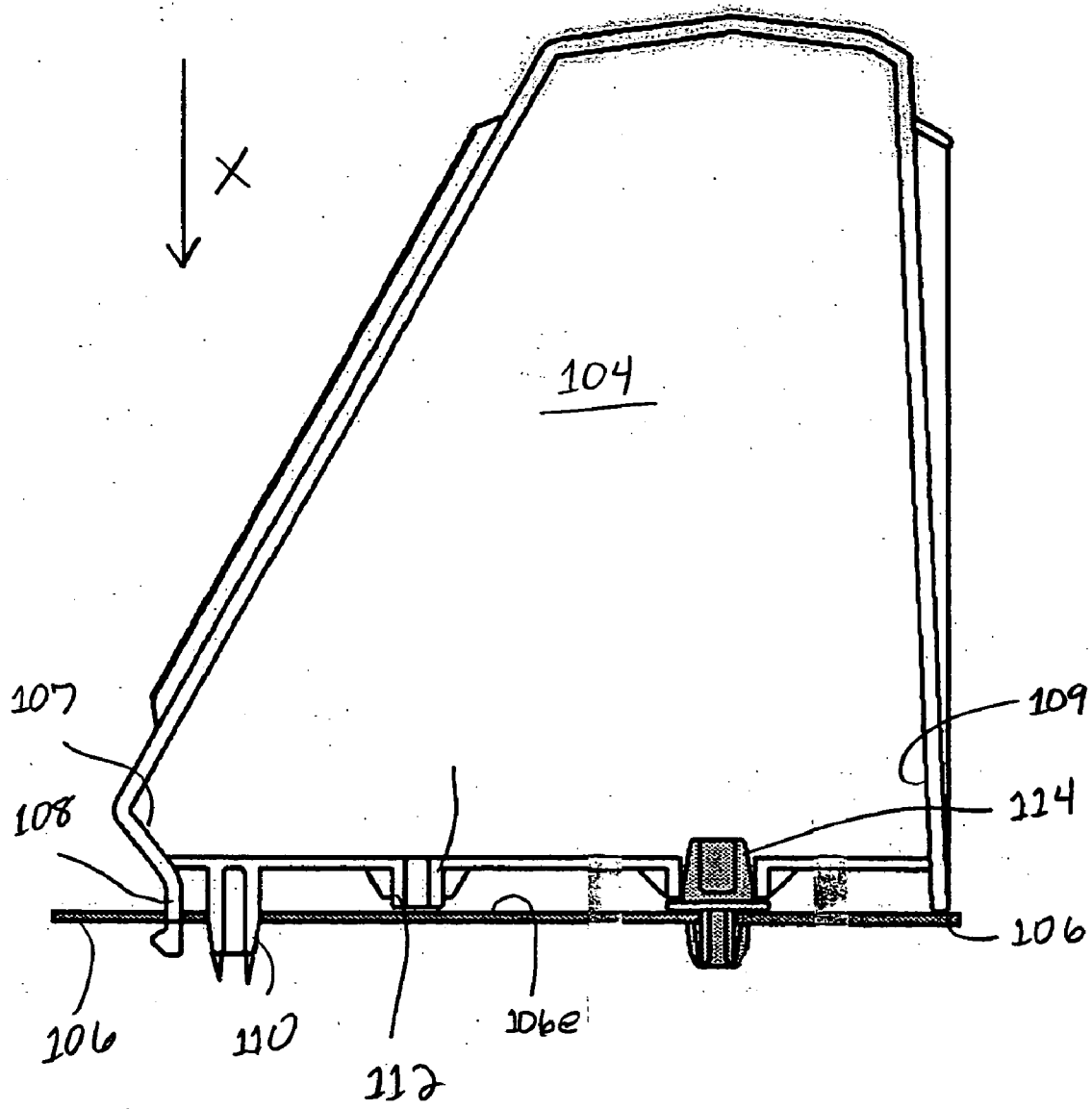


Figure 6

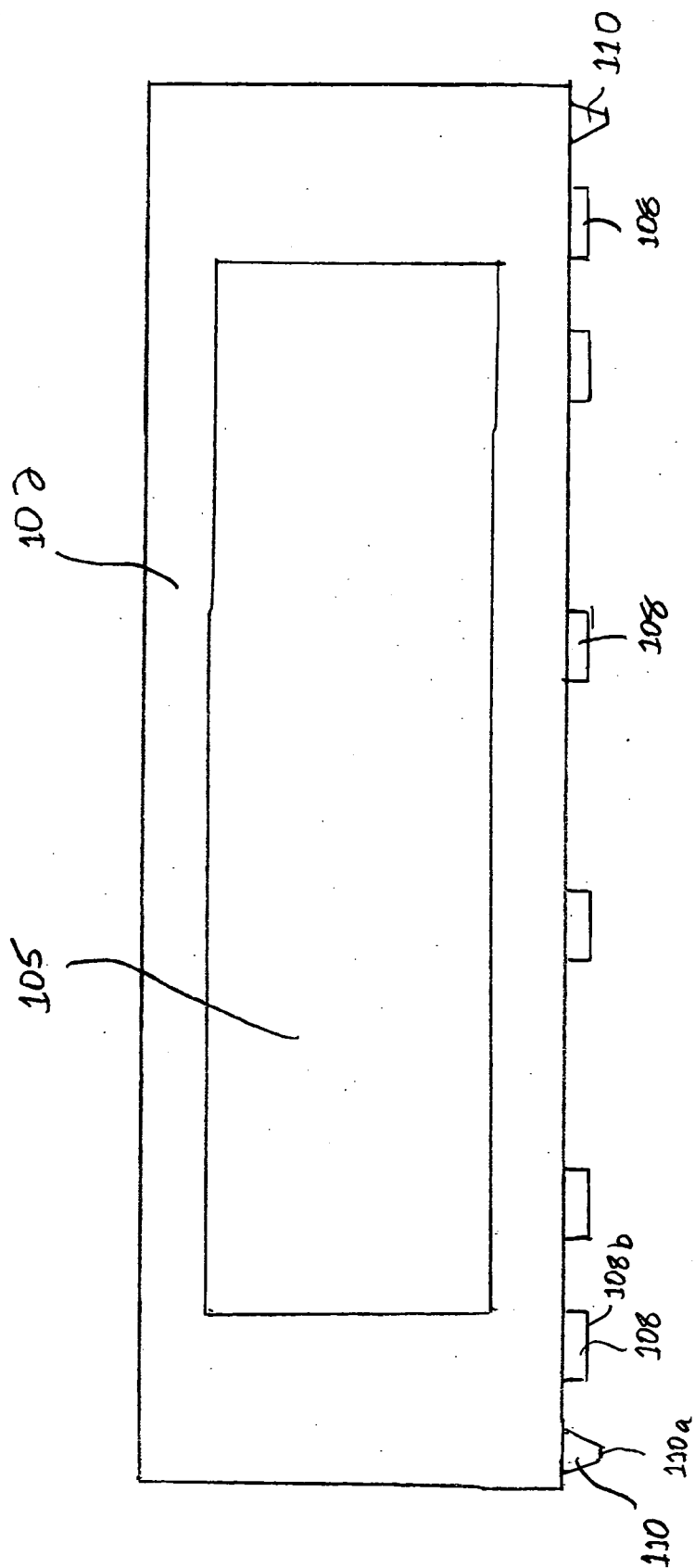
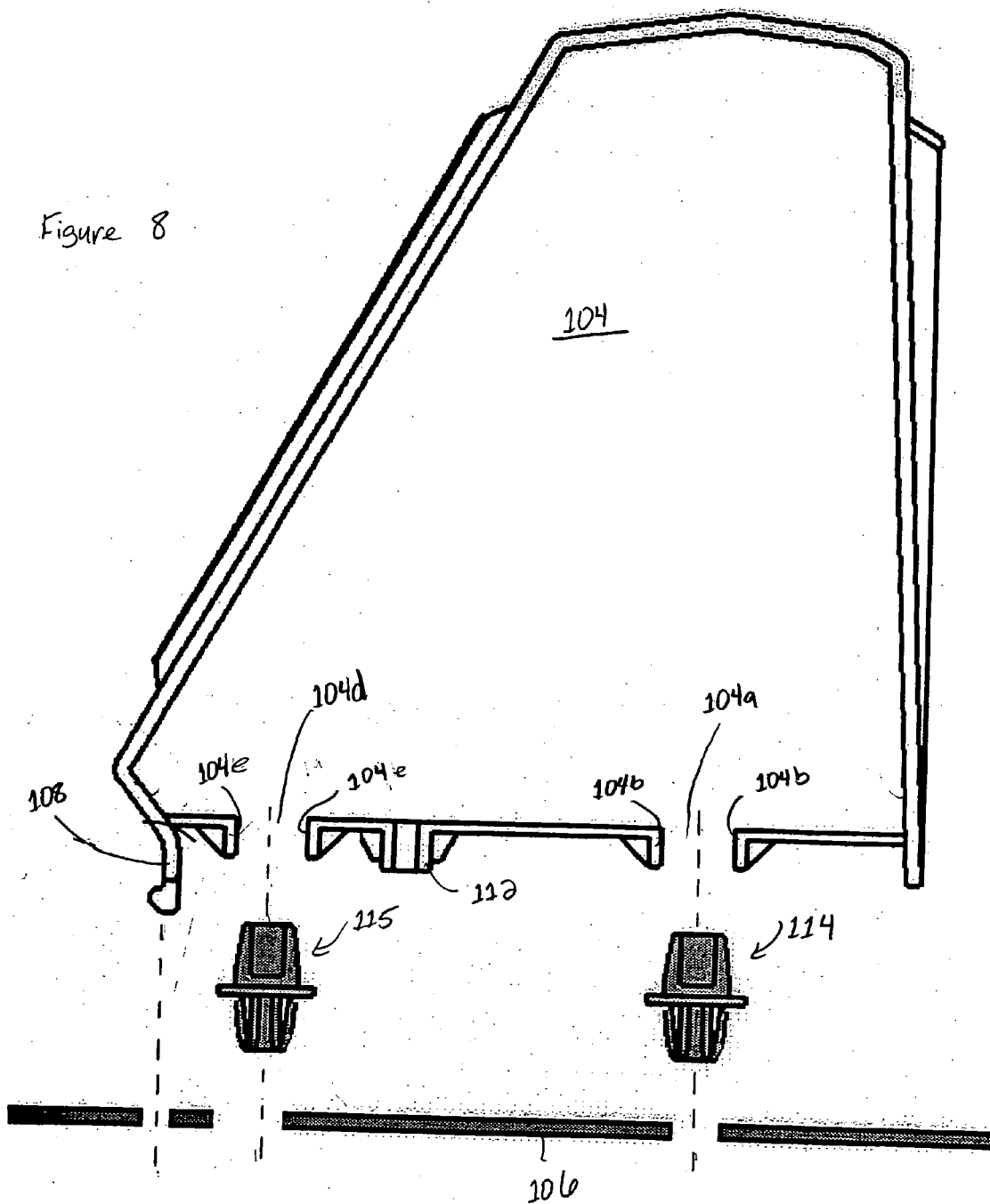


Figure 7

Figure 8



APPLIANCE CONSOLE ASSEMBLY

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates to home appliances, and more particularly, to consoles associated with appliances such as washing machine and/or dryers.

[0003] 2. Discussion of the Related Art

[0004] Today, a vast majority of people use washers and dryers, either in their home or in a commercial facility, to clean clothes. Typically, these washing machines and dryers include a cabinet and a console, where the console is mounted on the top surface of the cabinet. The console allows a user to control the operation of the washing machines and dryers. The consoles mount to the body through the use of hardware, such as screws and other fasteners. The fasteners are located throughout the console, including the front of the console visible to the user. Understandably, a user may find the presence of fasteners on the front of the console to be unsightly. Also, insertion of the fasteners throughout the console increase both the labor and parts associated with manufacturing the appliance, thereby increasing overall costs for the consumer.

[0005] Attempts to address these problems include the related art console **10** shown with reference to **FIG. 1**. The console **10** includes a pair of feet **12** and a pair of feet **14** disposed at a console bottom **10a**. the pairs of feet **12** and **14** are structures which attach the console to the cabinet. The pairs of feet **12** and **14** extend downwardly from the console **10**. The pairs of feet **12** and **14** are integrally formed with the console **10** such that the console **10** and the pairs of feet **12** and **14** from a single unit.

[0006] The pairs of feet **12** and **14** include recesses **12a** and **14a** which engage slots **16a** and **16b** of a top portion **16** when the console **10** is inserted therein. During installation of the console **10**, the pair of feet **12** are first inserted into the slot **16a**. The console **10** is then rearwardly rotated as indicated by directional arrow **Z** such that the pair of feet **14** engage and fit downwardly through the slot **16b**.

[0007] There are problems associated with the related art, for example should one of the feet break, the entire console must be replaced, thereby increasing the overall cost associated with purchasing and maintaining the appliance.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] Accordingly, the present invention is directed to an appliance (e.g. a washing machine and/or dryer) as well as an appliance console that substantially obviates one or more of the problems due to limitations and disadvantages of the related art.

[0009] An advantage of the present invention is to provide an appliance as well as an appliance console where the console does not require replacement if a coupling structure breaks.

[0010] Another advantage of the present invention is to provide an appliance and an appliance console where the console may be easily attached to a cabinet of an appliance.

[0011] Additional features and advantages of the invention will be set forth in the description which follows, and in part

will be apparent from the description, or may be learned by practice of the invention. The objectives and other advantages of the invention will be realized and attained by the structure particularly pointed out in the written description and claims hereof as well as the appended drawings.

[0012] In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, the aforementioned and other advantages are achieved by a console assembly for an appliance that includes a cabinet. The console assembly comprises a console having a surface that includes a console passageway. The console assembly also includes a rear peg that projects upward from a surface associated with the appliance cabinet and through the console passageway.

[0013] In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the aforementioned and other advantages are achieved by an appliance comprising a cabinet having a surface; a console having a surface that includes a console passageway; and a rear peg that projects upward from the cabinet surface and through the console passageway.

[0014] It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary and explanatory and are intended to provide further explanation of the invention as claimed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0015] The accompanying drawings, which are included to provide a further understanding of the invention and are incorporated in and constitute a part of this specification, illustrate embodiments of the invention and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the invention.

[0016] In the drawings:

[0017] **FIG. 1** is a side view of an appliance console in accordance with the related art;

[0018] **FIG. 2** is a perspective view of an appliance;

[0019] **FIG. 3** is a side view of a console in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

[0020] **FIG. 4** is a side view of a rear peg used in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

[0021] **FIG. 5** is a side view of a flange used in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

[0022] **FIG. 6** is a side view of a console attached to the top surface of the appliance cabinet in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] **FIG. 7** is a front view of the console in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention; and

[0024] **FIG. 8** is a side view of a console in accordance with an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE ILLUSTRATED EMBODIMENTS

[0025] **FIG. 2** is a perspective view of an appliance **100** in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. The appliance **100** may be any type of appliance including, but not limited to, a washing machine, a dryer or the like. The appliance **100** includes a cabinet **102** and a console **104**. The console **104** includes a user interface **105** as shown in

FIG. 7 through which the user controls functionality of the appliance **100**. The console **104** attaches to the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102**, as shown in greater detail in **FIG. 3**.

[0026] **FIG. 3** is a side view of a console **104** in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention. The console **104** attaches to the top surface **106** with at least one front flange **108**, a pair of front pegs **110** and a pair of posts **112**. The front pegs **110** and the posts **112** are an integral part of the console **104**. The front pegs **110** and the posts **112** are located adjacent to and/or near the front edge of the console **104** and they have a substantially circular cross-section in accordance with this embodiment. However, the front pegs **110** and the posts **112** may, alternatively, employ any suitable cross-sectional shape. The console **104** also attaches to the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102** using rear pegs **114**.

[0027] **FIG. 4** is a side view of one of the rear pegs **114** in accordance with exemplary embodiments of the present invention. As shown, rear peg **114** is affixed to the top surface **106** through the use of flanges **116** and a stem **118** where the stem **118** extends through an opening in the top surface **106** and flanges **116** secure the rear peg **114** by engaging the under side **106d** of the top surface **106**.

[0028] During assembly, the rear peg **114** is inserted through the opening in the top surface **106**. the flanges **116** flex inward to permit the rear peg **114** to pass through the opening. When the flanges **116** clear the under side **106d** of the top surface **106**, the flanges **116** flex outward and engage the under side **106d** of the top surface **106** as stated.

[0029] The rear peg **114**, as shown in **FIG. 4**, also includes an upper body portion **120** and a flange **122**. The flange **122** engages the upper side **106e** of top surface **106** to further secure rear peg **114** to the top surface **106**.

[0030] When the console **104** is installed, the upper body portion **120** of rear peg **114** projects upward through a passageway **104a** defined by the console flange **104b**. In addition, the console flange **104b** rests on the rear peg flange **122** as shown in **FIG. 4** such that rear peg flange **122** is sandwiched between the console **104** and the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102**.

[0031] In accordance with the first embodiment of the present invention, the upper body portion **120** of the rear pegs **114** has a circular cross-section. The stem **118** has a square cross-section. However, the upper body portion **120** and the stem **118** of the rear pegs **114** may employ any suitable, alternative cross-sectional shape.

[0032] As shown in **FIG. 4**, the rear pegs **114** are independent components. They are separate from the console **104**. Advantageously, any of the rear pegs **114** may be replaced if broken, without having to replace the console **104**. It should be noted that the rear pegs **114** are, unlike the front pegs **110** and the posts **112**, located towards the back edge of the console **104**. Moreover, the rear pegs **114** may be constructed from any suitable material that provides the previously described functionality, such as plastic or the like.

[0033] The console **104** also attaches to the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102** with one or more flanges **108**. As shown in **FIG. 5**, the flange **108** includes an inclined

portion **108a** which facilitates the insertion of flange **108** through a corresponding opening in the top surface **106**. The flange **108** also includes a stem **108b** that engages the top surface **106** when the console **104** is installed. Still further, the flange **108** includes a number of rear projections **108c** (although only one rear projection is shown in the side view of **FIG. 5**). The rear projections **108c** engage the edge of the opening opposite the inclined portion **108a**. Thus, the rear projections **108c** secure the flange in the opening. Moreover, the rear projections **108c** preferably have a shape that facilitates the insertion of the flange into the opening.

[0034] **FIG. 6** shows the console **104** attached to the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102** in accordance with the first embodiment of the present invention. In order to attach the console **104**, the rear pegs **114** are affixed to the top cover surface **106** as previously discussed. The flanges **108** are inserted through a corresponding opening in the top surface **106** and a downward force is applied as indicated by directional arrow **X** such that the front pegs **110** project through and engage the top surface **106** and the posts **112** rest on the upper side **106e** of the top surface **106**. In addition, as the downward force is applied, the upper body portion **120** of the rear pegs **114** project upward through and engage the console passageway **104a**.

[0035] **FIG. 7** is a front view of the console **104**. As shown, the front pegs **110** extend below the flanges **108**. Thus, the bottom surface **10a** of the front pegs **110** extends below the bottom surface **108b** of the flanges **108**. This reduces the likelihood of damage to the flanges **108** during installation and removal of the console **104**.

[0036] **FIG. 8** illustrates an alternative embodiment of the present invention. As shown, the console **104** does not include front pegs **110**. Instead, the console **104** includes a console passageway **104d** (although only one passageway **104d** is shown in the side view of **FIG. 8**) defined by flanges **104e**. In addition, this alternative embodiment employs front pegs **115**, as shown, where front pegs **115** are independent structures that are the same or substantially similar to rear pegs **114**. Like rear pegs **114**, front pegs **115** are affixed to the top surface **106** of the appliance cabinet **102**, and the upper body portion of front pegs **115** project upward through and engage the corresponding console passageway **104e** when the console **104** is installed.

[0037] It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various modifications and variation can be made in the present invention without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Thus, it is intended that the present invention cover the modifications and variations of this invention provided they come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A console assembly for an appliance that includes a cabinet, the console assembly comprising:

a console having a surface that includes a console passageway disposed therein; and

a rear peg that projects upward from a surface associated with the appliance cabinet and through the console passageway.

2. The console assembly as recited in claim 1, the console further comprising:

a flange disposed at a first end of the console where the flange projects downward through an opening in the surface of the appliance cabinet.

3. The console assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein the console passageway is disposed at a second end of the console opposite the first end of the console.

4. The console assembly as recited in claim 2, wherein the console further comprises:

a front peg disposed at the first end of the console.

5. The console assembly as recited in claim 4, wherein the front peg projects downward from the console through a second opening in the surface of the appliance cabinet wherein the front peg has a length which is greater than a length of the console flange.

6. The console assembly as recited in claim 1, the console further comprising:

a post disposed proximate to the console front peg.

7. The console assembly as recited in claim 6, wherein the post projects downward from the console and engages the surface of the appliance cabinet.

8. The console assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein the rear peg is affixed to the surface of the appliance cabinet.

9. The console assembly as recited in claim 8, the rear peg comprising:

an upper body portion that projects upward through the console passageway.

10. The console assembly as recited in claim 8, the rear peg comprising:

a first flange that engages with an upper surface of the appliance cabinet.

11. The console assembly as recited in claim 8, the rear peg comprising:

a stem projecting downward through a corresponding opening in the surface of the appliance cabinet.

12. The console assembly as recited in claim 8, the console comprising:

a pair of flanges that engage an under side of the surface of the appliance cabinet.

13. The console assembly as recited in claim 1, the console further comprising:

a second console passageway disposed therein

14. The console assembly as recited in claim 13 further comprising:

a front peg that projects upward from the surface associated with the appliance cabinet and through the second console passageway.

15. A console assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein the appliance is a washing machine.

16. A console assembly as recited in claim 1, wherein the appliance is a dryer.

17. An appliance comprising:

a cabinet having a surface;

a console having a surface that includes a console passageway disposed therein;

a rear peg that projects upward from the cabinet surface and through the console passageway.

* * * * *