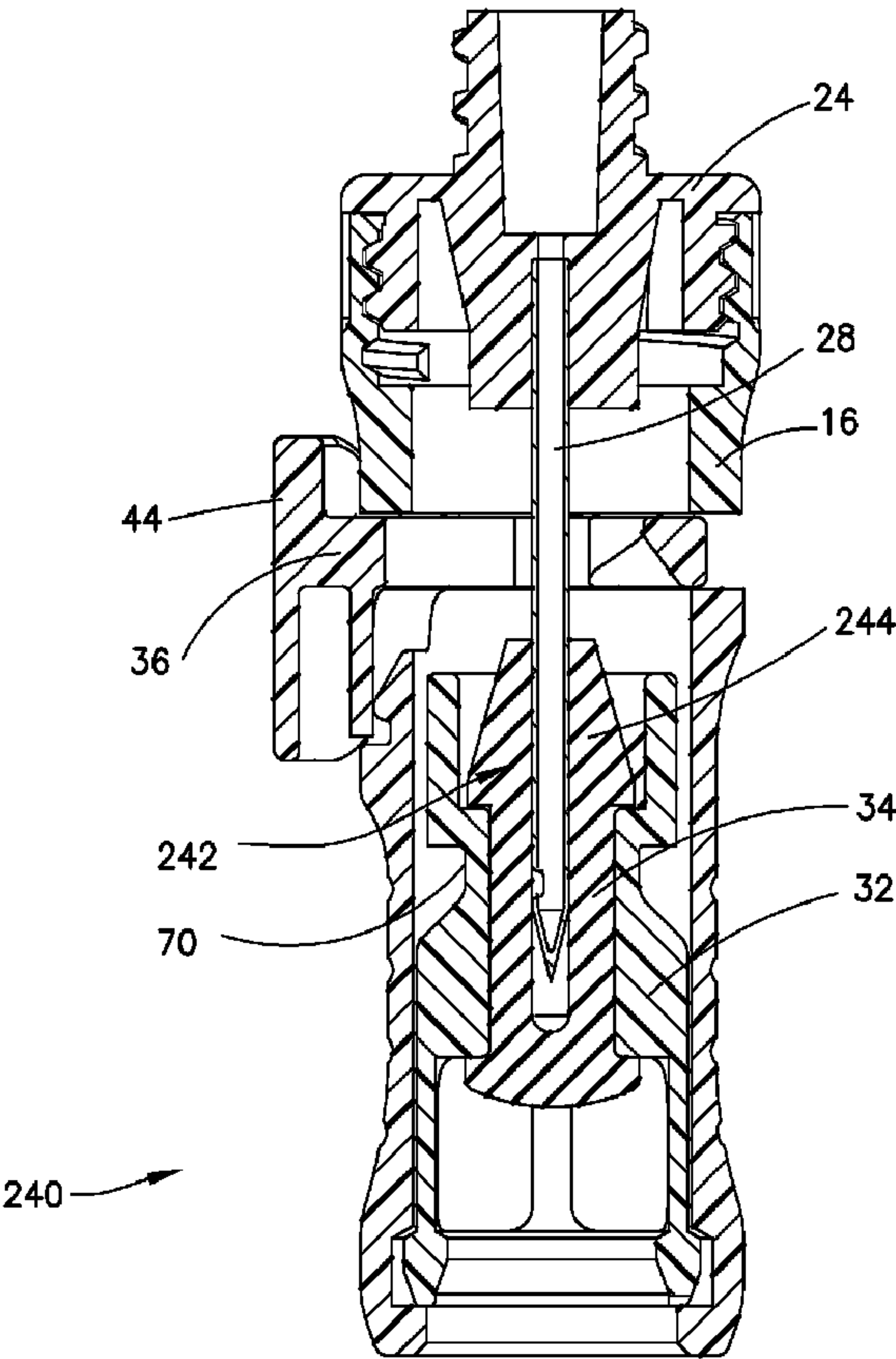




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(54) **Titre : ADAPTATEUR POUR SERINGUE DOTE D'UN MECANISME DE REGULATION PAR DESACCOUPLLEMENT**
(54) **Title: SYRINGE ADAPTER WITH DISCONNECTION FEEDBACK MECHANISM**



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**
A syringe adapter includes a housing having a first end and a second end with the first end configured to be secured to a first container, a cannula having a first end and a second end with the second end positioned within the housing, and a collet having a

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

first end and a second end with at least a portion of the collet received within the housing. The collet includes a body defining a passageway, a seal member received by the passageway, and an arcuate, resilient locking member connected to the body of the collet. The collet is movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted.

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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SYRINGE ADAPTER WITH DISCONNECTION FEEDBACK MECHANISM

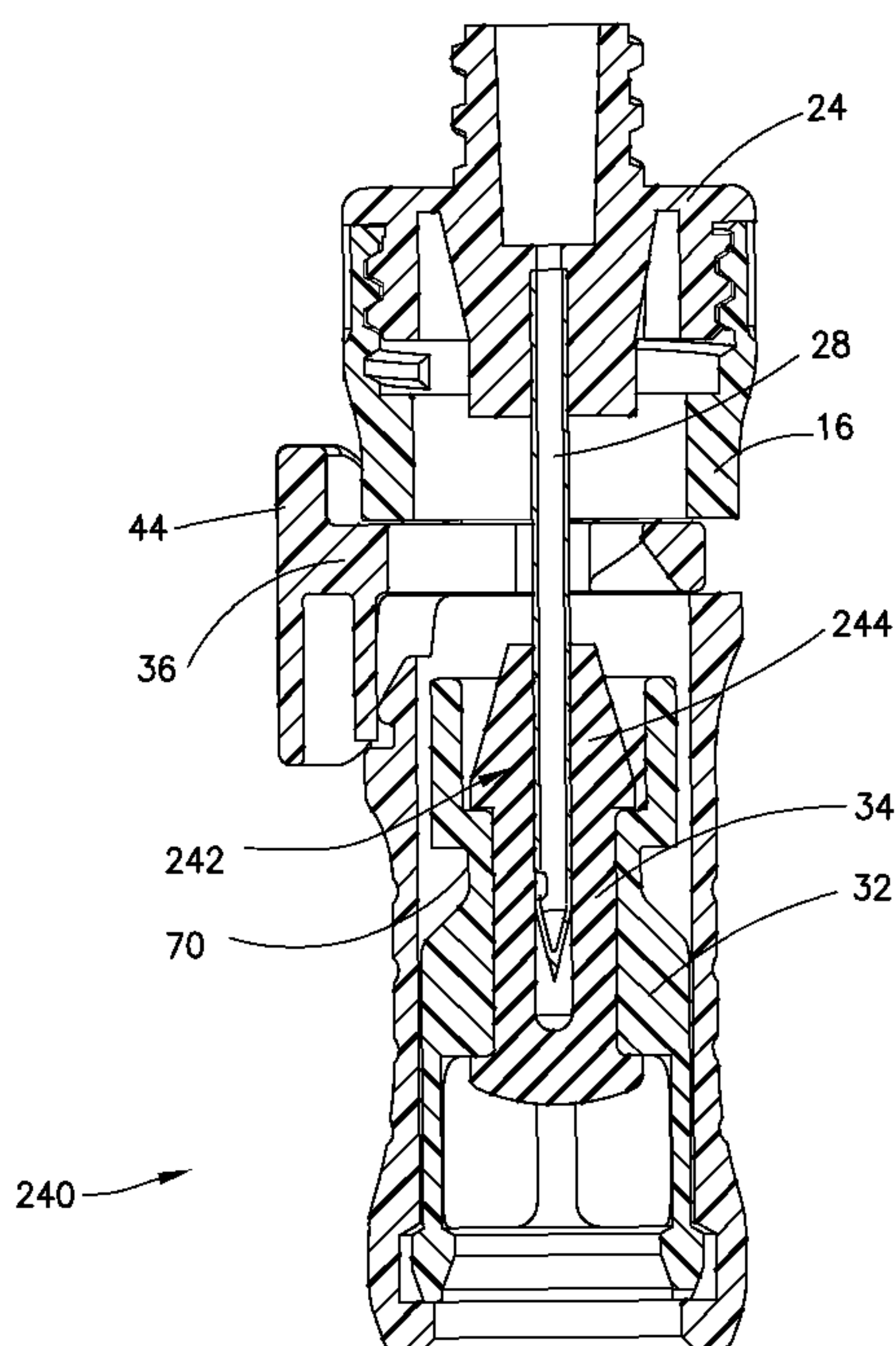


FIG. 57A

(57) Abstract: A syringe adapter includes a housing having a first end and a second end with the first end configured to be secured to a first container, a cannula having a first end and a second end with the second end positioned within the housing, and a collet having a first end and a second end with at least a portion of the collet received within the housing. The collet includes a body defining a passageway, a seal member received by the passageway, and an arcuate, resilient locking member connected to the body of the collet. The collet is movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted.

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SYRINGE ADAPTER WITH DISCONNECTION FEEDBACK MECHANISM**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****1. Field of the Disclosure**

[0001] The present disclosure relates generally to a system for the closed transfer of fluids. More particularly, the present disclosure relates to a system that provides leak-proof sealing during fluid transfer from a first container to a second container.

2. Description of the Related Art

[0002] Health care providers reconstituting, transporting, and administering hazardous drugs, such as cancer treatments, can put themselves at risk of exposure to these medications and present a major hazard in the health care environment. For example, nurses treating cancer patients risk being exposed to chemotherapy drugs and their toxic effects. Unintentional chemotherapy exposure can affect the nervous system, impair the reproductive system, and bring an increased risk of developing blood cancers in the future. In order to reduce the risk of health care providers being exposed to toxic drugs, the closed transfer of these drugs becomes important.

[0003] Some drugs must be dissolved or diluted before they are administered, which involves transferring a solvent from one container to a sealed vial containing the drug in powder or liquid form, by means of a needle. Drugs may be inadvertently released into the atmosphere in gas form or by way of aerosolization, during the withdrawal of the needle from the vial and while the needle is inside the vial if any pressure differential between the interior of the vial and the surrounding atmosphere exists.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0004] In one aspect, a syringe adapter includes a housing having a first end and a second end with the first end configured to be secured to a first container, a cannula having a first end and second end with the second end of the cannula positioned within the housing, and a collet having a first end and a second end with at least a portion of the collet received within the housing. The collet includes a body defining a passageway, a seal member received by the passageway, and a locking member connected to the body of the collet, the collet being movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted.

The syringe adapter further includes a disconnection feedback mechanism configured to bias the collet towards the second end of the housing when the collet is in the second position.

[0005] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be an extension portion of the seal member. The extension portion of the seal member may be configured to engage a portion of the housing when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the seal member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing. The extension portion of the seal member may include a frusto-conical surface. The extension portion of the seal member may taper in a direction extending from the first end of the housing to the second end of the housing. The extension portion may narrow in width in a direction extending from the second end of the housing to the first end of the housing.

[0006] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be a biasing member secured to the collet. The biasing member may be a spring. The cannula may extend through a central opening of the spring. The biasing member may be configured to engage a portion of the housing when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the biasing member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing.

[0007] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be a biasing member secured to the housing. The biasing member may be a spring. The biasing member may be configured to engage a portion of the collet when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the biasing member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing.

[0008] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be configured to move the collet from a position adjacent to the first end of the housing to a position intermediate the first and second ends of the housing.

[0009] In a further aspect, a system for closed transfer of fluids includes a syringe adapter including a housing having a first end and a second end with the first end configured to be secured to a first container, a cannula having a first end a second end with the second end positioned within the housing, and a collet having a first end and a second end with at least a portion of the collet received within the housing. The collet includes a body defining a passageway, a seal member, and a locking member connected to the body. The collet is movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted. The syringe adapter also includes a connection arrangement having a first connection interface with the first connection interface configured to engage a corresponding connection interface of a mating connector. The system further includes a second component having a membrane

and a collet interface surface configured to receive and engage the locking member of the collet, and a disconnection feedback mechanism configured to provide an indication to a user when the first connection interface is disengaged from a corresponding connection interface of a mating connector.

[0010] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be positioned within the housing of the syringe adapter or may be provided on the second component. The second component may be a patient connector. The second component may include a second connection interface configured to engage the first connection interface when the collet is in the second position.

[0011] The collet may include a second connection interface that is configured to engage the first connection interface of the connection arrangement when the collet is in the second position.

[0012] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be an extension portion of the seal member.

[0013] Alternatively, the disconnection feedback mechanism may be a biasing member secured to the collet.

[0014] Further, the disconnection feedback mechanism may be a biasing member secured to the housing.

[0015] The disconnection feedback mechanism may be configured to bias the collet towards the second end of the housing when the collet is in the second position, with the collet configured to move to a position intermediate the first and second ends of the housing to provide the indication to the user when the first connection interface is disengaged from the corresponding connection interface of the mating connector.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] The above-mentioned and other features and advantages of this disclosure, and the manner of attaining them, will become more apparent and the disclosure itself will be better understood by reference to the following descriptions of aspects of the disclosure taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0017] **Fig. 1** is a perspective view of a system according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0018] **Fig. 2** is an exploded, perspective view of a syringe adapter of the system of **Fig. 1** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0019] **Fig. 3** is a front view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0020] **Fig. 4** is a left side view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0021] **Fig. 5** is a rear view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0022] **Fig. 6** is a top view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0023] **Fig. 7** is a bottom view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0024] **Fig. 8** is a cross-sectional view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 3** taken along line 8-8 according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0025] **Fig. 9** is a perspective view of a collet of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 2** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0026] **Fig. 10** is a front view of the collet of **Fig. 9** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0027] **Fig. 11** is a cross-sectional view of the collet of **Fig. 10** taken along line 11-11 according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0028] **Fig. 12** is a perspective view of a patient connector of the system shown in **Fig. 1** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0029] **Fig. 13** is a front view of the patient connector of **Fig. 12** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0030] **Fig. 14** is bottom view of the patient connector of **Fig. 12** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0031] **Fig. 15** is a top view of the patient connector of **Fig. 12** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0032] **Fig. 16** is a cross-sectional view of the patient connector of **Fig. 15** taken along line 16-16 according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0033] **Fig. 17** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 1** showing a first stage of securing a syringe adapter to a patient connector according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0034] **Fig. 18** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 17** taken along line 18-18 according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0035] **Fig. 19** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 1** showing a second stage of securing a syringe adapter to a patient connector according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0036] **Fig. 20** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 19** taken along line 20-20 according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0037] **Fig. 21** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 1** showing a third stage of securing a syringe adapter to a patient connector according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0038] **Fig. 22** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 21** taken along line **21-21** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0039] **Fig. 23** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 1** showing a fourth stage of securing a syringe adapter to a patient connector according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0040] **Fig. 24** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 23** taken along line **24-24** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0041] **Fig. 25** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 1** showing a final stage of securing a syringe adapter to a patient connector according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0042] **Fig. 26** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 25** taken along line **26-26** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0043] **Fig. 27** is a perspective view of a system according to a second aspect of the present invention.

[0044] **Fig. 28** is an exploded perspective view of the system of **Fig. 27** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0045] **Fig. 29** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 27** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0046] **Fig. 30** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 29** taken along line **30-30** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0047] **Fig. 31** is a perspective view of a system according to a third aspect of the present invention.

[0048] **Fig. 32** is an exploded perspective view of the system of **Fig. 31** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0049] **Fig. 33** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 31** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0050] **Fig. 34** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 33** taken along line **34-34** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0051] **Fig. 35** is a perspective view of a system according to a fourth aspect of the present invention.

[0052] **Fig. 36** is an exploded perspective view of the system of **Fig. 35** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0053] **Fig. 37** is a rear view of the system of **Fig. 35** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0054] **Fig. 38** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 37** taken along line **38-38** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0055] **Fig. 39** is a perspective view of a system according to a fifth aspect of the present invention.

[0056] **Fig. 40** is an exploded perspective view of the system of **Fig. 39** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0057] **Fig. 41** is a front view of the system of **Fig. 39** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0058] **Fig. 42** is a cross-sectional view of the system of **Fig. 41** taken along line **42-42** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0059] **Fig. 43A** is a perspective view of a syringe adapter according to yet another aspect of the present invention.

[0060] **Fig. 43B** is a cross-sectional view of the syringe adapter of **Fig. 43A** according to one aspect of present invention.

[0061] **Fig. 44** is a cross-sectional view of a patient connector for use in connection with the syringe adapter of **Fig. 43A** according to one aspect of present invention.

[0062] **Figs. 45A-45F** are perspective views of a collet according to further aspects of the present invention.

[0063] **Fig. 46** is a cross-sectional view of a system according to another aspect of the present invention.

[0064] **Fig. 47** is a cross-sectional view of a system according to yet another aspect of the present invention.

[0065] **Fig. 48A** is a perspective view of a system according to yet a further aspect of the present invention, showing a syringe adapter disconnected from a patient connector.

[0066] **Fig. 48B** is a perspective view of the system of **Fig. 48A** showing a syringe adapter connected to a patient connector.

[0067] **Fig. 49A** is a cross-sectional view of **Fig. 48A** taken along line **49A-49A** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0068] **Fig. 49B** is a cross-sectional view of **Fig. 48B** taken along line **49B-49B** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0069] **Fig. 50A** is a perspective view of a system according to a further aspect of the present invention, showing a syringe adapter disconnected from a patient connector.

[0070] **Fig. 50B** is a perspective view of the system of **Fig. 50A** showing a syringe adapter connected to a patient connector.

[0071] **Fig. 51A** is a cross-sectional view of **Fig. 50A** taken along line **51A-51A** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0072] **Fig. 51B** is a cross-sectional view of **Fig. 50B** taken along line **51B-51B** according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0073] **Fig. 52** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter according to another aspect of the present invention.

[0074] **Fig. 53** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter according to a further aspect of the present invention.

[0075] **Fig. 54** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter according to yet another aspect of the present invention.

[0076] **Figs. 55A-G** are cross-sectional views of a first membrane according to various aspects of the present invention.

[0077] **Figs. 56A-F** are cross-sectional views of a second membrane according to various aspects of the present invention.

[0078] **Fig. 57A** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter having a disconnection feedback mechanism according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0079] **Fig. 57B** is a cross-sectional view of the syringe adapter shown in **Fig. 57A**, showing the disconnection feedback mechanism in a compressed state according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0080] **Fig. 58A** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter having a disconnection feedback mechanism according to a second aspect of the present invention.

[0081] **Fig. 58B** is a cross-sectional view of the syringe adapter shown in **Fig. 58A**, showing the disconnection feedback mechanism in a compressed state according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0082] **Fig. 59A** is a cross-sectional view of a syringe adapter having a disconnection feedback mechanism according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0083] **Fig. 59B** is a cross-sectional view of the syringe adapter shown in **Fig. 59A**, showing the disconnection feedback mechanism in a compressed state according to one aspect of the present invention.

[0084] Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views. The exemplifications set out herein illustrate exemplary aspects of the disclosure, and such exemplifications are not to be construed as limiting the scope of the disclosure in any manner.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0085] The following description is provided to enable those skilled in the art to make and use the described aspects contemplated for carrying out the invention. Various modifications, equivalents, variations, and alternatives, however, will remain readily apparent to those skilled in the art. Any and all such modifications, variations, equivalents, and alternatives are intended to fall within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

[0086] For purposes of the description hereinafter, the terms “upper”, “lower”, “right”, “left”, “vertical”, “horizontal”, “top”, “bottom”, “lateral”, “longitudinal”, and derivatives thereof shall relate to the invention as it is oriented in the drawing figures. However, it is to be understood that the invention may assume various alternative variations, except where expressly specified to the contrary. It is also to be understood that the specific devices illustrated in the attached drawings, and described in the following specification, are simply exemplary aspects of the invention. Hence, specific dimensions and other physical characteristics related to the aspects disclosed herein are not to be considered as limiting.

[0087] Referring to **Fig. 1**, one aspect of a system **10** for the closed transfer of fluids includes a syringe adapter **12** and a patient connector **14**. The system **10** provides substantially leak-proof sealing during transfer of a fluid from a first container (not shown), such as a vial, to a second container (not shown), such as a syringe, IV bag, or patient IV line. The leak-proof sealing of the system **10** substantially prevents leakage of both air and liquid during use of the system **10**. Although not shown, the system **10** may further include a vial adapter, pressure equalization device, IV bag adapter, as well as other components typically utilized in closed system transfer devices, such as infusion lines and extension sets.

[0088] Referring to **Figs. 2-14**, one aspect of the syringe adapter **12** includes a housing **16** having a first end **18** and a second end **20** and defining an interior space **22**. The first end **18** of the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12** includes a syringe attachment **24**, such as a female luer connector, that defines a passageway **26**. Although a female luer connector is shown for connection with a corresponding male luer connector of a syringe (not shown), other suitable connection arrangements may be utilized for connection to a syringe, container, or any other medical device. The syringe attachment **24** is secured to the first end **18** of the housing **16** via a threaded connection, although any other suitable connection may be utilized. A cannula **28** having a distal end **30** is secured to the syringe attachment **24** and in fluid communication with the passageway **26** of the syringe attachment **24**. The syringe adapter **12** further includes a seal arrangement positioned within the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12**. The seal arrangement includes a collet **32** that receives a first membrane **34**. The collet **32** is configured to move

within the interior space 22 of the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 as discussed in more detail below. The housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 may include structure to enhance gripping of the syringe adapter 12 by a user. Additional or alternative grip structures and surfaces may be provided to assist a user in gripping the body of the syringe adapter 12.

[0089] Referring to **Figs. 2-8**, the syringe adapter 12 includes a first connection interface 36 positioned intermediate the first and second ends 18, 20 of the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 that includes a lock member 38 that is received within a transverse opening 40 in the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12. The lock member 38 is configured to move between a closed position and an open position. The lock member 38 defines a central opening 42 and includes a button 44 that is configured to be engaged by a hand of a user or operator of the syringe adapter. The lock member 38 further includes a cantilever spring 46 that extends in a longitudinal direction of the syringe adapter 12. The lock member 38 is configured to engage a cam surface that extends radially outward from the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12. In particular, the lock member 38 is configured to be provided in the closed position, where a portion of the lock member 38 adjacent to the central opening 42 of the lock member 38 is positioned within the interior space 22 of the syringe adapter 12 when no external forces are applied to the lock member 38. When the lock member 38 is moved to the open position where the central opening 42 of the lock member 38 is aligned with the interior space 22 of the syringe adapter 12 or does not create an interference or barrier to objects being inserted into the interior space 22, the cantilever spring 46 engages the cam surface to create a biasing force that urges the lock member 38 back towards the closed position. Accordingly, when the lock member 38 is moved to the open position, the lock member 38 will be urged back to the closed position when the external force acting on the lock member 38 is released. Although the lock member 38 is shown with the cantilever spring 46, any other suitable biasing member may be provided including, but not limited to, compression springs, extension springs, elastomeric material, etc.

[0090] Referring to **Fig. 2**, the lock member 38 further includes a pair of projections 48 that extend radially outward from the lock member 38. The pair of projections 48 is configured to engage corresponding projections provided on the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 to retain the lock member 38 to the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12. In other words, the projections 48 of the lock member 38 are configured to engage the projections of the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 to prevent the lock member 38 from being disconnected and removed from the transverse opening 40 of the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12.

[0091] Referring to **Figs. 8-11**, the collet 32 has a body 52 with a first end 54 and a second end 56. The body 52 defines a passageway 58 that extends through the body 52. The body 52

is generally cylindrical, although other suitable shaped collets may be utilized. The collet **32** further includes a locking member **60** connected to the body **52** of the collet **32**. As discussed in more detail below, the collet **32** is movable from a first position where the locking member **60** is open to receive a mating connector (shown in **Fig. 18**), such as the patient connector **14**, to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member **60** is restricted. The locking member **60** is connected to the body **52** via a plurality of arms **62**. The locking member **60** is arcuate and resilient as a result of the connection of the locking member **60** to the body **52** via the plurality of arms **62**. More specifically, the plurality of arms **62** is flexible and allows the locking member **60** to expand radially outward or radially inward. In one aspect, the locking member **60** is configured to expand radially outward when a mating connector, such as the patient connector **14**, is inserted into the locking member **60** and subsequently moving radially inward as the collet **32** is transitioned from the first position to the second position. Alternatively, the locking member **60** may not move radially inward or outward when a mating connector, such as the patient connector **14**, is inserted into the locking member **60** and may subsequently move radially inward as the collet **32** is transitioned from the first position to the second position. The second end **20** of the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12** defines an annular recess **64** adjacent to the interior space **22** that receives the locking member **60** when the collet **32** is in the first position. The annular recess **64** of the housing **16** provides the space for the locking member **60** to expand radially outward. When the collet **32** is transitioned from the first position to the second position, the collet **32** moves axially toward the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12** with the locking member **60** being biased radially inward due to the engagement of the locking member **60** with the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12**.

[0092] As shown in **Fig. 9**, the locking member **60** of the collet **32** defines a pair of openings **66** that extend in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the collet **32**. The openings **66** bifurcate the locking member **60** into two arcuate portions that are each connected to the body **52** of the collet **32** by two arms **62**. However, as discussed in more detail below, other suitable arrangements and shapes for the collet **32** and the locking member **60** may be utilized. The locking member **60** of the collet **32** protrudes radially inward and radially outward relative to the plurality of arms **62**.

[0093] Referring again to **Figs. 8-11**, the body **52** of the collet **32** includes a second connection interface **70** that is configured to mate with and lock with the first connection interface **36** of the syringe adapter **12**. The second connection interface **70** is defined by the body **52** of the collet **32** and, more particularly, is defined by a locking surface **72**. The second

connection interface 70 further includes a lead-in surface defined by the first end 54 of the collet 32. The lead-in surface of the second connection interface 70 defines a rounded transition between the body 52 of the collet 32 and the lead-in surface. The locking surface 72 is a ring-shaped recess that is recessed relative to the body 52 of the collet 32 and configured to receive the lock member 38 of the first connection interface 36. The locking surface 72 is defined by 90 degree angles, although other suitable shapes and angles may be utilized. The first end 54 of the collet 32 is configured to be received within the interior space 22 of the syringe adapter 12 when the lock member 38 of the first connection interface 36 is in the open position and restricted from moving within the interior space 22 of the syringe adapter 12 when the lock member 38 is in the closed position. The lead-in surface of the second connection interface 70 is configured to engage the lock member 38 of the first connection interface 36 to further move the lock member 38 and further bias the cantilever spring 46. When the second connection interface 70 is fully mated to the first connection interface 36, the lock member 38 of the first connection interface 36 is configured to be in the closed position and received within the locking surface 72 to lock the first connection interface 36 from longitudinal and transverse movement relative to the second connection interface 70, but still allowing rotational movement relative thereto.

[0094] Referring to Figs. 2 and 8, the first membrane 34 includes a body 82 having a first end 84 and a second end 86. The first end 84 and the second end 86 of the body 82 of the first membrane 34 include a first head portion 88 and a second head portion 90, respectively. The body 82 of the first membrane 34 defines a passageway 92 extending from the first end 84 towards the second end 86 of the body 82. The passageway 92 terminates at a position intermediate the first and second ends 84, 86 of the body 82. As shown in Fig. 8, the body 82 of the first membrane 34 is received by the passageway 58 of the collet 32 and is secured to the collet 32. The first head portion 88 of the first membrane 34 engages a counter-bored portion of the collet 32 adjacent to the passageway 58 of the collet 32. The second head portion 90 extends beyond the passageway 58 of the body 52 of the collet 32 with the second head portion 90 engaging the body 52 of the collet 32. The second head portion 90 defines a convex surface, although other suitable membrane arrangements may be provided as discussed in more detail below. The cannula 28 is received within the passageway 92 of the first membrane 34 with the distal end 30 of the cannula 28 positioned within the passageway 92 when the collet 32 is in the first position. The distal end 30 of the cannula 28 is configured to pierce the first membrane 34 and extend through the first membrane 34 when the collet 32 is transitioned from the first position to the second position. The first membrane 34 is configured to engage and

seal an intermediate portion of the cannula **28** during use of the syringe adapter **12** to maintain a sealed and leak-free connection with the patient connector **14** or mating component.

[0095] As discussed in more detail below, upon engagement of the first membrane **34** by a corresponding membrane during use, such as a membrane from the patient connector **14**, a vial adapter, or IV bag spike, the collet **32** is configured to move toward the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12** and transition from the first position to the second position such that the distal end **30** of the cannula **28** pierces the first membrane **34** to place the syringe adapter **12** in fluid communication with corresponding devices secured to the syringe adapter **12**. When the collet **32** is returned to the first position, the first membrane **34** can be disengaged from the corresponding membrane thereby positioning the distal end **30** of the cannula **28** within the passageways **58**, **92** of the collet **32** and the first membrane **34**. Such an arrangement shields the distal end **30** of the cannula **28** to prevent accidental needle sticks and also prevents the leakage of any fluid during transfer of fluids when using the syringe adapter **12**.

[0096] Referring to **Figs. 12-16**, the patient connector **14** includes a body **102** having a first end **104** and a second end **106** and defining a passageway **108** that extends therethrough. The first end **104** of the patient connector **14** also includes a collet interface **110**. The collet interface **110** is defined by a portion of the body **102** of the patient connector **14** that is recessed relative to the first end **104** of the body **102** of the patient connector **14**. The first end **104** of the body **102** of the patient connector **14** also includes a membrane seat **112** that receives a second membrane **114**. As discussed above in connection with the syringe adapter **12**, the second membrane **114** of the patient connector **14** is configured to engage the first membrane **34** of the syringe adapter **12** and provide a substantially leak-free connection with the syringe adapter **12** during fluid transfer. The second end **106** of the patient connector **14** includes an IV line attachment **116**, such as a male luer connector, although any other suitable connection arrangement may be utilized.

[0097] Referring to **Figs. 17-26**, the process of mating the syringe adapter **12** with the patient connector **14** is shown. Although the syringe adapter **12** is shown being connected to the patient connector **14**, the syringe adapter **12** would similarly connect to other components having similar structure as the patient connector **14**, including, but not limited to, vial adapters and IV bag adapters. As shown in **Figs. 17** and **18**, the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12** is aligned with the patient connector **14**. In particular, the longitudinal axis of the syringe adapter **12** is aligned with the longitudinal axis of the patient connector **14** with the lock member **38** of the first connection interface **36** in the closed position. As shown in **Figs. 19-20**, the patient connector **14** is moved into the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12**

towards the collet 32 with the collet 32 provided in the first position such that the locking member 60 is open to receive the patient connector 14.

[0098] Referring to Figs. 21 and 22, further movement of the patient connector 14 towards the first end 18 of the syringe adapter 12 causes the first membrane 34 to engage the second membrane 114 and the first end 104 of the patient connector 14 to pass through the locking member 60 of the collet 32. As discussed above, movement of the patient connector 14 within the locking member 60 may bias the locking member 60 radially outward or, alternatively, may receive the first end 104 of the patient connector 14 without any radial movement of the locking member 60. Due to the interference between the locking member 60 and the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12, as well as the contact of the first end 104 of the patient connector 14 and the locking member 60, the collet 32 will not move toward the first end 18 of the syringe adapter 12 until first and second membranes 34, 114 have been sufficiently compressed and the locking member 60 is received within the collet interface 110 of the patient connector 14. Once the first and second membranes 34, 114 have been sufficiently compressed, the locking member 60 will be forced into the collet interface 110 of the patient connector 14 due to the engagement of the locking member 60 with the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12 and the continued axial movement of the collet 32 toward the first end 18 of the syringe adapter 12.

[0099] Referring to Figs. 23 and 24, further continued movement of the patient connector 14 towards the first end 18 of the syringe adapter 12 causes the collet 32 to also move towards the first end 18 of the syringe adapter 12 via the engagement between the first and second membranes 34, 114. At this stage, the collet 32 is in the second position and the first end 104 of the patient connector 14 will be locked and secured to the collet 32 due to the engagement of the locking member 60 of the collet 32 with the collet interface 110. The locking member 60 of the collet 32 cannot expand radially outward to release the patient connector 14 until the collet 32 is returned to the first position. Further, during continued movement at this stage, the lock member 38 of the first connection interface 36 engages the second connection interface 70 of the collet 32, which transitions the lock member 38 from the closed position (shown in Fig. 22) to the open position (shown in Fig. 24).

[00100] When the lock member 38 is moved from the closed position to the open position, the cantilever spring 46 will engage the cam surface of the housing 16 of the syringe adapter 12, which creates a biasing force that urges the lock member 38 back to the closed position. Such movement back to the closed position, however, is prevented by engagement of the lock member 38 with the body 52 of the collet 32. Although Fig. 24 shows an overlap between the collet 32 and the first connection interface 36, the collet 32 would move the first connection

interface **36** as described herein. Similarly, the locking member **60** of the collet **32** would not overlap with the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12**, but would be forced inwardly as described herein. With the lock member **38** of the first connection interface **36** in the open position, the second connection interface **70** is allowed to continue its movement within the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12** to continue the process of mating the syringe adapter **12** to the patient connector **14**. During this step, the distal end **30** of the cannula **28** pierces the first and second membranes **34**, **114** and is placed in fluid communication with the passageway **108** of the patient connector **14**.

[00101] Referring to **Figs. 25** and **26**, the patient connector **14** and the collet **32** are moved towards the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12** until the first membrane **34** abuts the syringe attachment **24** of the syringe adapter **12** and/or when the second end **106** of the patient connector **14** abuts the second end **20** of the syringe adapter **12**. At this stage, the second connection interface **70** of the collet **32** will be aligned with the lock member **38** of the first connection interface **36** such that the lock member **38** is received within the second connection interface **70**. The lock member **38** is biased towards the closed position by the cantilever spring **46** and when the lock member **38** reaches the second connection interface **70**, the lock member **38** is free to move into the closed position where a portion of the lock member **38** is positioned within the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12**.

[00102] In the position shown in **Fig. 26**, the first connection interface **36** is fully mated and locked with respect to the second connection interface **70**. In such a position, the syringe adapter **12** is prevented from being disconnected from patient connector **14** due to the engagement between the lock member **38** of the first connection interface **36** and the second connection interface **70**. Although the locked engagement between the first connection interface **36** and the second connection interface **70** prevents axial and transverse movement relative to each other, the first connection interface **36** and the second connection interface **70** are free to rotate relative to each other when locked to each other, which advantageously prevents IV line tangling and/or other accidental disengagement or device failure associated with lack of rotation between components. In particular, the patient connector **14** is typically attached to a patient IV line and the rotation of the first connection interface relative to the second connection interface assists to prevent twisting of a patient IV line connected to the patient connector **14**. However, the first connection interface **36** and the second connection interface **70** may be provided with a keyed surface arrangement to prevent such relative rotation if desired.

[00103] Referring again to **Figs. 17-26**, in order to disconnect the first connection interface **36** from the second connection interface **70**, the button **44** of the lock member **38** of the first connection interface **36** is engaged by a user and pushed radially inward to transition the lock member **38** from the closed position to the open position. The patient connector **14** can then be removed from the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12** in the reverse order of the steps to connect the syringe adapter **12** to the patient connector **14**. When the second connection interface **70** is separated from the first connection interface **36**, the lock member **38** is moved to the closed position. The patient connector **14** cannot be separated from the syringe adapter **12** until the collet **32** is returned to the first position shown in **Fig. 22** where the locking member **60** of the collet **32** can expand radially outward into the annular recess **64** of the housing **16** thereby allowing separation of the patient connector **14** from the collet **32**. Although not shown, the syringe adapter **12** may be provided with one or more indication arrangements to provide a visual, tactile, or auditory indication to a user during connection of the syringe adapter to a mating component.

[00104] The system **10** described above as well as further aspects of the system **10** described below may include one or more arrangements to reduce the friction between the first membrane **34** and the cannula **28**. Such arrangements may be a lubricant provided on or within the first membrane **34** and/or on the cannula **28**. The lubricant may be a silicone-based lubricant, although any other suitable lubricant, coating, layer, material, etc. may be utilized. The first membrane **34** and/or needle **28** may be made from a lubricious or friction-reducing material, coated with a lubricant, and/or impregnated with a lubricant. The arrangement to reduce the friction between the first membrane **34** and the cannula **28** may be a wet and/or dry lubrication system.

[00105] Referring to **Figs. 27-30**, a further aspect of a system **140** for the closed transfer of fluids is shown. The system **140** shown in **Figs. 27-30** is similar to the system **10** shown in **Figs. 1-26** and discussed above. In the system **140** shown in **Figs. 27-30**, however, the locking member **60** of the collet **32** is ring-shaped and defines only one opening **142** extending transversely to a longitudinal axis of the collet **32**. Further, the system **140** includes a disconnection prevention mechanism **144** that prevents the accidental disconnection of a syringe from the syringe adapter **12**. When the collet **32** is fully displaced toward the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12**, the collet **32** may engage the disconnection prevention mechanism **144** to substantially prevent disconnection of a syringe from the syringe adapter **12** by allowing the syringe attachment **24** to rotate freely. The patient connector **14** may also include a membrane seat **146** having at least one protrusion and an upper rim **148** that receives and

engages a corresponding shaped portion of the second membrane **114**. The second membrane **114** may be secured to the membrane seat **146** via ultrasonic welding, by swaging the seat **146**, or by adhesive, although other suitable attachment arrangements may be utilized.

[00106] Referring to **Figs. 31-34**, a further aspect of a system **152** for the closed transfer of fluids is shown. The system **152** shown in **Figs. 31-34** is similar to the system **10** shown in **Figs. 1-26** and discussed above. In the system **152** shown in **Figs. 31-34**, however, a first membrane **154** is generally T-shaped with a flange portion **156** that is received within a corresponding seat **158** defined by the collet **32**.

[00107] Referring to **Figs. 35-38**, a further aspect of a system **162** for the closed transfer of fluids is shown. The system **162** shown in **Figs. 35-38** is similar to the system shown in **Figs. 1-26** and discussed above. In the system **162** shown in **Figs. 35-38**, however, the collet **32** receives a pair of spaced apart membranes **164** defining a space therebetween within the collet **32**. The pair of membranes **164** is received by first and second membrane seats **166**, respectively.

[00108] Referring to **Figs. 39-42**, a further aspect of a system **170** for the closed transfer of fluids is shown. The system **170** shown in **Figs. 39-42** is similar to the system **10** shown in **Figs. 1-26** and discussed above. In the system **170** shown in **Figs. 39-42**, however, a first membrane **171** defines an annular recess **172** that is received by a corresponding projection **174** of the collet **32**. Further, the first membrane **171** is contoured and received by a correspondingly contoured portion of the collet **32**. A second membrane **175** also defines an annular recess **176** that is received by a corresponding projection **178** of the patient connector **14**. The body **102** of the patient connector **14** is defined by an outer portion **180** and an inner portion **182** that are secured to each other via any suitable securing arrangement, such as ultrasonic welding, spin welding, or laser welding.

[00109] Referring to **Figs. 43A, 43B, and 44**, another aspect of a syringe adapter **12A** is shown. The syringe adapter **12A** shown in **Figs. 43A, 43B, and 44** is similar to the syringe adapter **12** shown in **Figs. 1-11** and discussed above. The syringe adapter **12A** shown in **Figs. 43A, 43B, and 44**, however, provides the first connection interface **36** at or near the second end **20** of the syringe adapter **12A**. Further, rather than providing the second connection interface **70** on the collet **32**, the patient connector **14** includes both the collet interface **110** as well as the second connection interface **70**. The syringe adapter **12A** operates in the same manner as described above in connection with **Figs. 1-26**.

[00110] Referring to **Figs. 45A-45F**, further aspects of the collet **32** of **Figs. 9-11** are shown. In **Fig. 45A**, the locking member **60** of the collet **32** is continuous and ring-shaped and defines

a plurality of notches that are configured to permit the locking member **60** to expand radially outward. In **Fig. 45B**, the locking member **60** is ring-shaped and defines a small slit extending transversely to a longitudinal axis of the collet **32**. In **Fig. 45C**, the body **52** of the collet **32** is secured to the locking member **60** via an extension portion **202** of the body **52** and the locking member **60** is ring-shaped and defines a slit **204** configured to permit the locking member **60** to expand radially outward. In **Fig. 45D**, the plurality of arms **62** each includes a respective locking member **60** that is formed by an enlarged head portion at the end of each arm **62**. In **Fig. 45E**, the locking member **60** is half ring-shaped. In **Fig. 45F**, the locking member **60** is arcuate and defines a single opening.

[00111] Referring to **Fig. 46**, a further aspect of the syringe adapter **12** of **Figs. 1-11** is shown. In particular, the first membrane **34** is generally sleeve-like and is configured to retract upon engagement with the patient connector **14**.

[00112] Referring to **Fig. 47**, a further aspect of the syringe adapter **12** of **Figs. 1-11** is shown. In particular, the first membrane **34** is generally cylindrical with convex portions at the first and second ends of the first membrane **34**.

[00113] Referring to **Figs. 48A-49B**, a further aspect of the syringe adapter **12** of **Figs. 1-11** is shown. A syringe adapter **210** shown in **Figs. 48A-49B** includes a collet **212** having a pair of resilient buttons **214** that is provided integrally with the collet **212**. The buttons **214** are received by a pair of openings **216** in the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **210** to lock the collet **212** once the syringe adapter **210** is fully connected and in fluid communication with a mating connector, such as a patient connector **14**. Pressing the buttons **214** will allow the mating connector to be disengaged and removed from the syringe adapter **210**.

[00114] Referring to **Figs. 50A-51B**, rather than providing the buttons **214** on the collet **212** as shown in **Figs. 48A-49B**, an indirect button arrangement may be provided. In particular, the housing **16** of the syringe adapter **12** is provided with a pair of buttons **220** that are configured to be depressed inwardly into the interior space **22** of the syringe adapter **12**. The collet **212** includes resilient button interface portions **222** that are configured to lock the collet **212** once the syringe adapter **210** is fully connected and in fluid communication with a mating connector, such as a patient connector **14**. Pressing the buttons **220** will disengage the button interface portions **222** of the collet **212** and allow the mating connector to be disengaged and removed from the syringe adapter **210**.

[00115] Referring to **Figs. 52-54**, further aspects of the collet **32** of **Figs. 9-11** are shown. In particular, rather than providing a collet that is formed as a unitary or single molded part, the collet **32** may be formed from one or more pieces that are secured to each other to form the

collet **32**. The multi-piece collet aspects allow various membrane arrangements where the membrane can be installed prior to final assembly of the collet **32**. The multiple pieces forming the collet **32** may be secured to each other via any suitable joining method, such as ultrasonic welding, spin welding, or laser welding.

[00116] Referring to **Figs. 55A-55G**, further aspects of the first membrane **34** are shown. In particular, various shapes, configuration, and cavities may be utilized for the first membrane **34**. Further, as shown in **Fig. 55G**, the first membrane **34** may include an insert **228** positioned within the first membrane **34**. The geometries shown in **Figs. 55A-55G** may be pushed or pulled into a mating component and retained without the need for secondary assembly processes or multi-piece housings. The aspects of the first membrane **34** shown in **Figs. 55D, 55E, and 55F** include a sealing portion **230** at the top of the first membrane **34** to engage and seal an intermediate portion of the cannula **28** during use.

[00117] Referring to **Figs. 56A-56F**, further aspects of the second membrane **114** are shown. In particular, various shapes, configurations, and cavities may be utilized for the second membrane **114**. The second membrane **114** may include a cavity, convex top surface, and include a retaining groove (**Figs. 56A and 56B**). The second membrane **114** may include a flat or planar top surface (**Fig. 56C**). The second membrane **114** may also include a flange with convex top surface without a cavity or projection (**Fig. 56D**), with a projection (**Fig. 56E**), with a cavity (**Fig. 56F**), or any other suitable combination of the above features.

[00118] Referring to **Figs. 57A and 57B**, a further aspect of a syringe adapter **240** is shown. The syringe adapter **240** shown in **Figs. 57A and 57B** is similar to the syringe adapters **12, 190, 210** described above, but further includes a disconnection feedback mechanism **242**. As shown in **Fig. 57A**, the disconnection feedback mechanism **242** is embodied as an extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34**. The extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34** includes a frusto-conical surface, although other suitable shaped surfaces may be utilized. The extension portion **244** extends beyond the first end **54** of the collet **32**, although the extension portion **244** may also be contained within the passageway **58** of the collet **32**. The extension portion **244** has an unbiased state (shown in **Fig. 57A**) and a biased state (shown in **Fig. 57B**). When the syringe adapter **12**, as shown in **Fig. 26**, is fully connected to the patient connector **14** with the first and second connection interfaces **36, 70** engaged, pushing the button **44** of the first connection interface **36** to release the connection between the first and second interfaces **36, 70** does not typically provide an indication to the user that the syringe adapter **12** can be removed from the patient connector **14**. As shown in **Fig. 57B**, when the syringe adapter **240** is fully connected to the patient connector **14** with the first connection interface **36** engaged

with the second connection interface **70**, the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34** is in the biased state caused by the engagement of the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34** with the syringe attachment **24**. Upon engaging and depressing the button **44** of the first connection interface **36**, the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34** will bias the collet **32** towards the second end **20** of the syringe adapter **12** thereby providing an indication to a user that the first connection interface **36** is disengaged from the second connection interface **70** and that the syringe adapter **12** may be separated from the patient connector **14**. Accordingly, the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34** provides a biasing force when in the biased state and provides a “kick off” indication to a user as a result of the movement of the collet **32** and the patient connector **14** caused by the biasing force. The disconnection feedback mechanism **242** may only move the collet **32** a small distance within the syringe adapter **12**. In particular, the disconnection feedback mechanism **242** may only bias the collet **32** from the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12** to a position intermediate the first and second ends **18**, **20** of the syringe adapter **12**.

[00119] Referring to **Figs. 58A** and **58B**, a further aspect of a disconnection feedback mechanism **254** is shown. Rather than providing the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34**, a biasing member **256** may be provided on the first end **54** of the collet **32**. The biasing member **256** has an unbiased state (shown in **Fig. 58A**) and a biased state (shown in **Fig. 58B**). The biasing member **256** may be a compression spring that is secured to or formed integrally with the collet **32**, although other suitable biasing members may be utilized. The biasing member **256** operates in the same manner described above in connection with the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34**.

[00120] Referring to **Figs. 59A** and **59B**, a further aspect of a disconnection feedback mechanism **260** is shown. Rather than providing the biasing member **256** on the first end **54** of the collet **32**, the biasing member **256** may be secured to the first end **18** of the syringe adapter **12** or the syringe attachment **24**. The biasing member **256** has an unbiased state (shown in **Fig. 59A**) and a biased state (shown in **Fig. 59B**). The biasing member **256** operates in the same manner described above in connection with the extension portion **244** of the first membrane **34**.

[00121] Although the disconnection feedback mechanisms **242**, **254**, **260** shown in **Figs. 57A-59B** are shown in connection with the syringe adapter **12**, the disconnection feedback mechanisms **242**, **254**, **260** may also be provided on other components, such as the patient connector **14**. Further, the disconnection feedback mechanisms **242**, **254**, **260** may be compressed over the full travel distance of the collet **32** or may only be compressed over a

partial travel distance of the collet **32**. The disconnection feedback mechanisms **242, 254, 260**, however, will store energy and move to the biased state as the syringe adapter **12** is connected to a mating connector.

[00122] While this disclosure has been described as having exemplary designs, the present disclosure can be further modified within the spirit and scope of this disclosure. This application is therefore intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the disclosure using its general principles. Further, this application is intended to cover such departures from the present disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which this disclosure pertains and which fall within the limits of the appended claims.

CLAIMS

1. A syringe adapter comprising:
 - a housing having a first end and a second end, the first end configured to be secured to a first container;
 - a cannula having a first end and a second end, the second end of the cannula positioned within the housing;
 - a collet having a first end and a second end, at least a portion of the collet received within the housing, the collet comprising a body defining a passageway, a seal member received by the passageway, and a locking member connected to the body of the collet, the collet being movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted; and
 - a disconnection feedback mechanism engaged with only one of the collet and the housing when the collet is in the first position, the disconnection feedback mechanism configured to bias the collet towards the second end of the housing when the collet is in the second position.
2. The syringe adapter of claim 1, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises an extension portion of the seal member.
3. The syringe adapter of claim 2, wherein the extension portion of the seal member is configured to engage a portion of the housing when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the seal member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing.
4. The syringe adapter of claim 2, wherein the extension portion of the seal member includes a frusto-conical surface.
5. The syringe adapter of claim 4, wherein the extension portion of the seal member tapers in a direction extending from the first end of the housing to the second end of the housing.

6. The syringe adapter of claim 5, wherein the extension portion narrows in width in a direction extending from the second end of the housing to the first end of the housing.

7. The syringe adapter of claim 1, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises a biasing member secured to the collet.

8. The syringe adapter of claim 1, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism is configured to move the collet from a position adjacent to the first end of the housing to a position intermediate the first and second ends of the housing.

9. The syringe adapter of claim 8, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises a spring, and the cannula extends through a central opening of the spring.

10. The syringe adapter of claim 7, wherein the biasing member is configured to engage a portion of the housing when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the biasing member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing.

11. The syringe adapter of claim 1, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises a biasing member secured to the housing.

12. The syringe adapter of claim 11, wherein the biasing member is a spring.

13. The syringe adapter of claim 11, wherein the biasing member is configured to engage a portion of the collet when the collet is moved from the first position to the second position thereby compressing the biasing member and biasing the collet toward the second end of the housing.

14. A system for closed transfer of fluids comprising:
a syringe adapter comprising:
a housing having a first end and a second end, the first end configured to be secured to a first container;
a cannula having a first end and a second end, the second end positioned within the housing;
a collet having a first end and a second end, at least a portion of the collet received within the housing, the collet comprising a body defining a passageway, a seal member, and a locking member connected to the body, the collet being movable from a first position where the locking member is open to receive a mating connector to a second position where radially outward movement of the locking member is restricted; and
a connection arrangement having a first connection interface;
a connection component comprising a membrane and a collet interface surface configured to receive and engage the locking member of the collet; and
a disconnection feedback mechanism engaged with only one of the collet and the housing when the collet is in the first position, the disconnection feedback mechanism configured to provide an indication to a user when the first connection interface is disengaged from a corresponding connection interface of the mating connector.

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism is positioned within the housing of the syringe adapter.

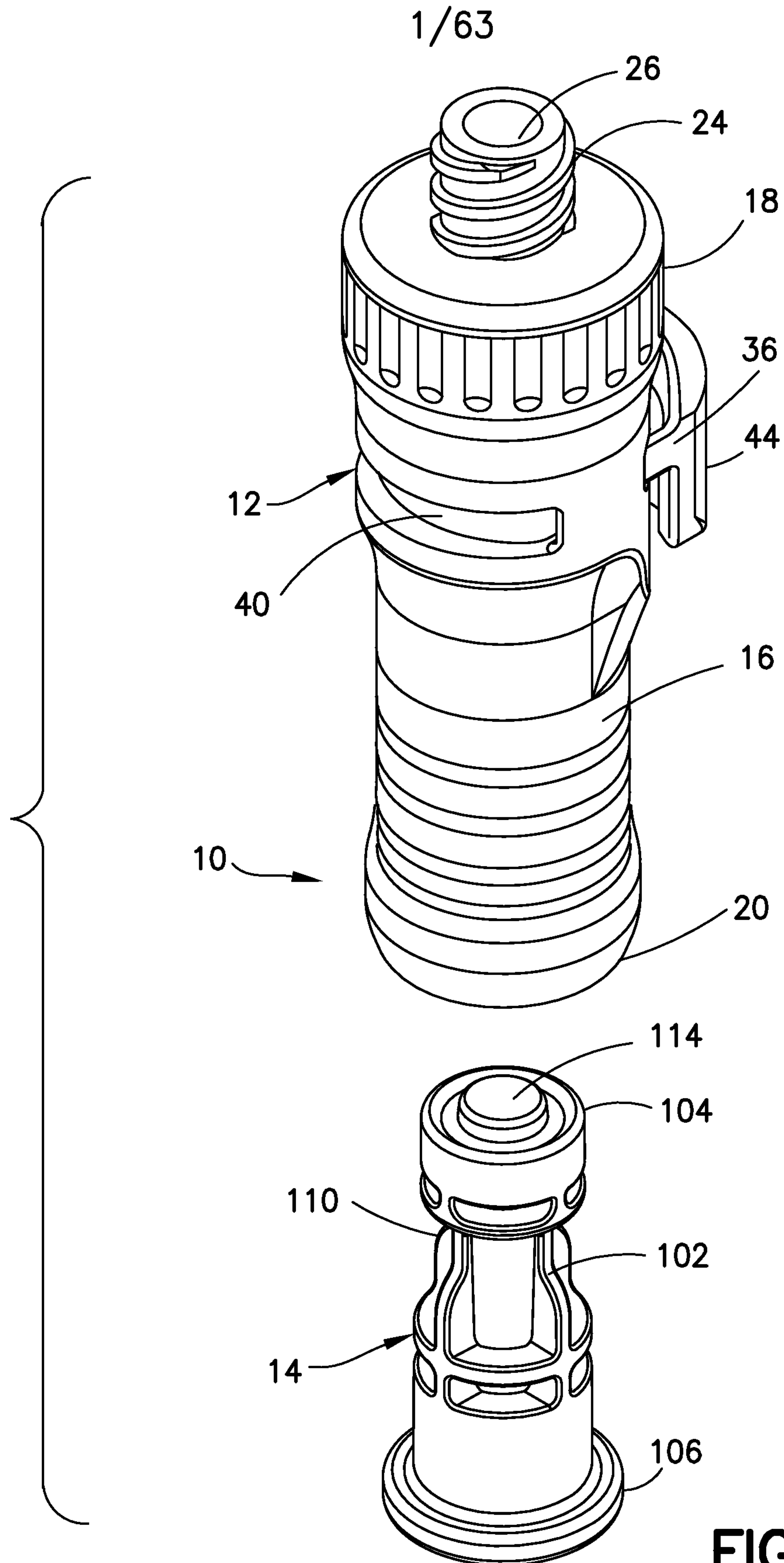
16. The system of claim 14, wherein the collet includes a second connection interface that is configured to engage the first connection interface of the connection arrangement when the collet is in the second position.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises an extension portion of the seal member.

18. The system of claim 14, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises a biasing member secured to the collet.

19. The system of claim 14, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism comprises a biasing member secured to the housing.

20. The system of claim 14, wherein the disconnection feedback mechanism is configured to bias the collet towards the second end of the housing when the collet is in the second position, the collet is configured to move to a position intermediate the first and second ends of the housing to provide the indication to the user when the first connection interface is disengaged from the corresponding connection interface of the mating connector.



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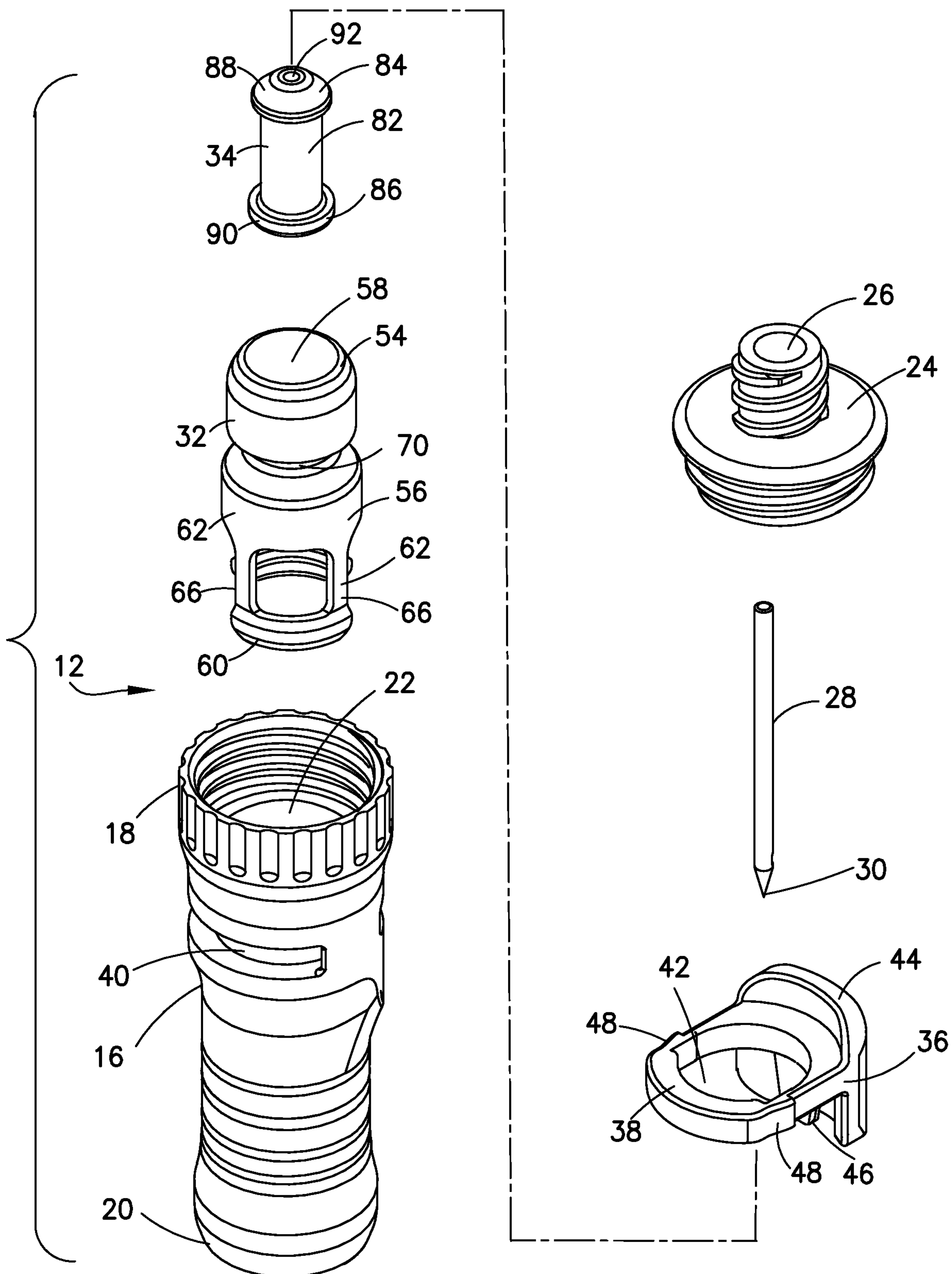


FIG. 2

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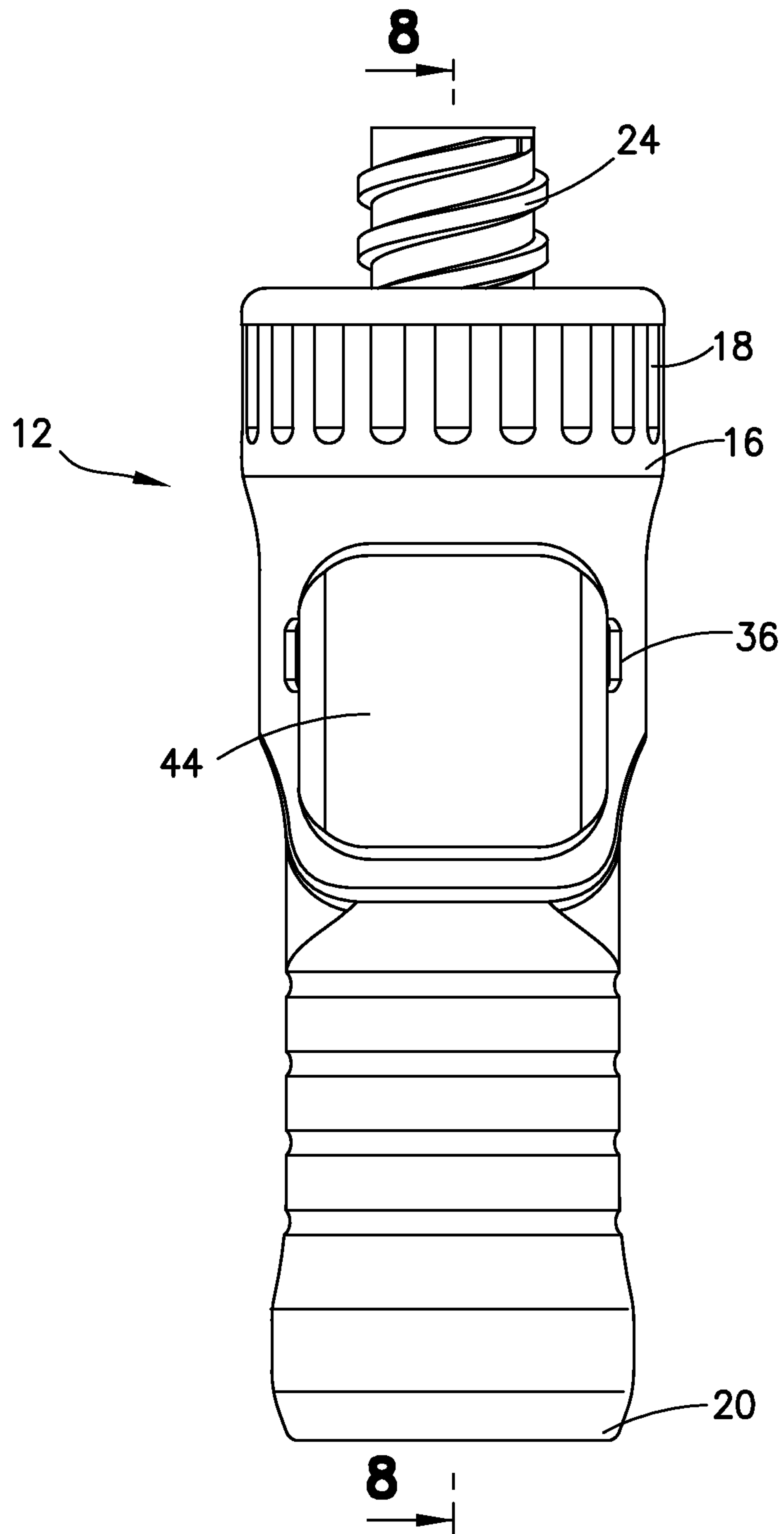


FIG.3

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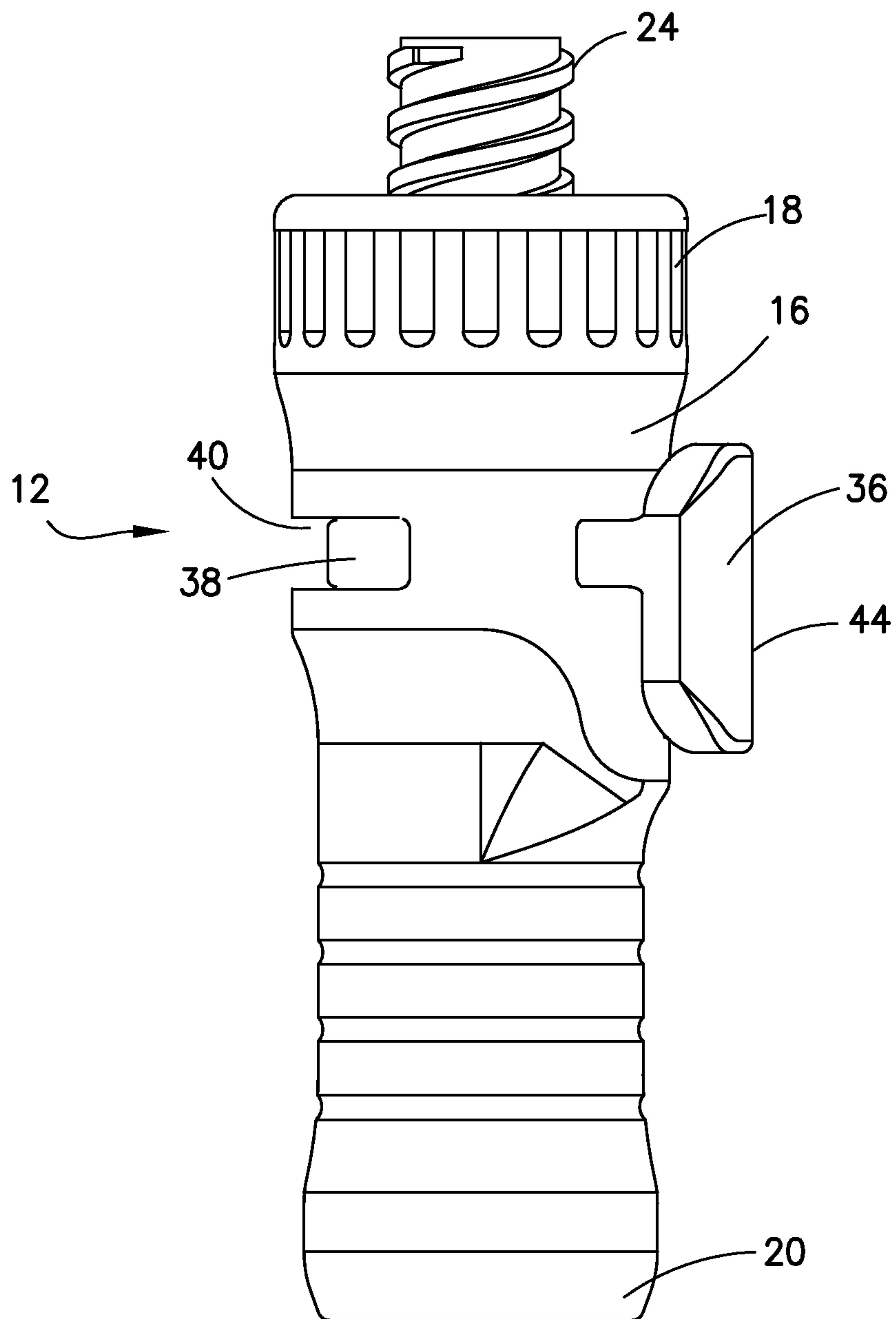


FIG. 4

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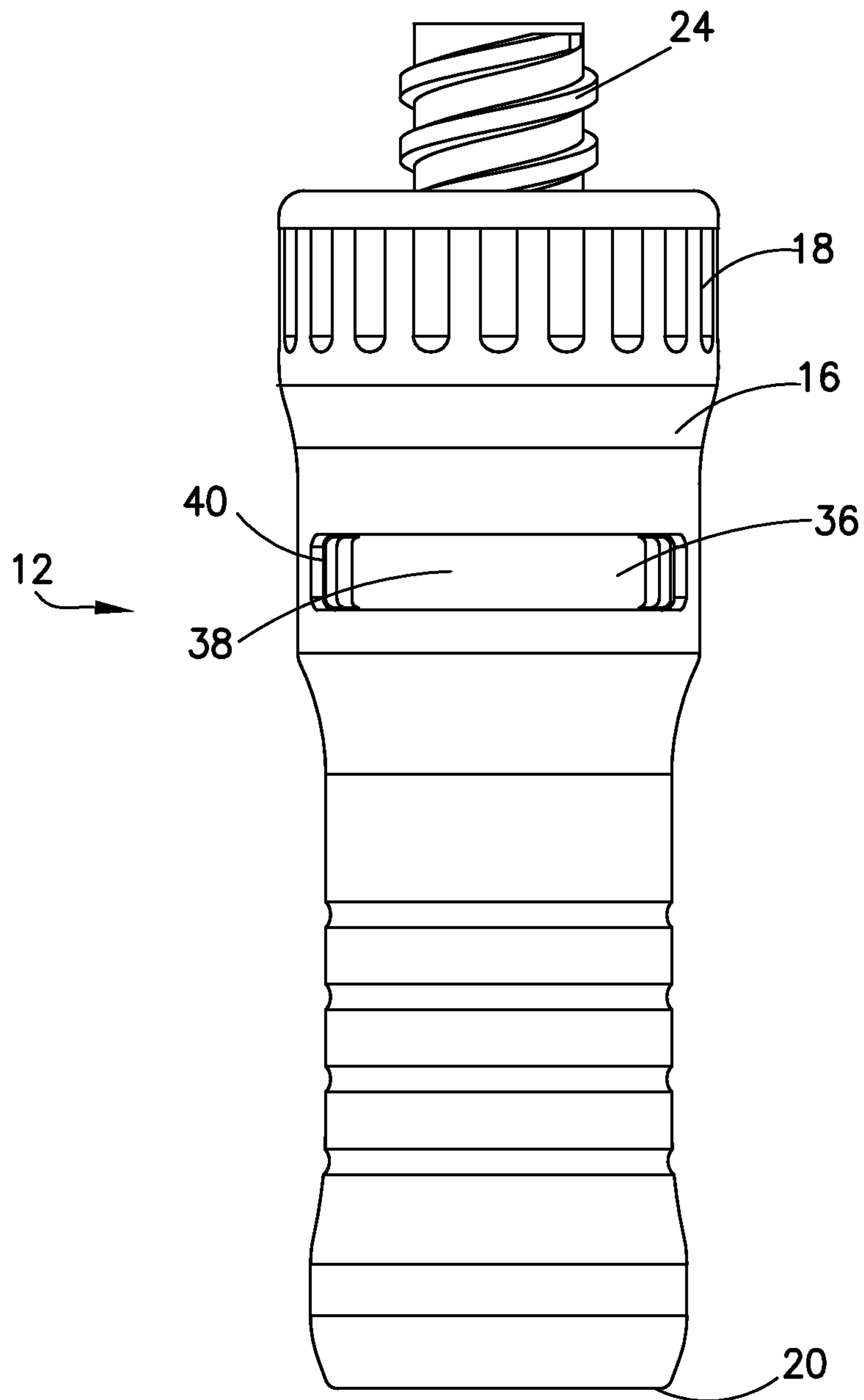
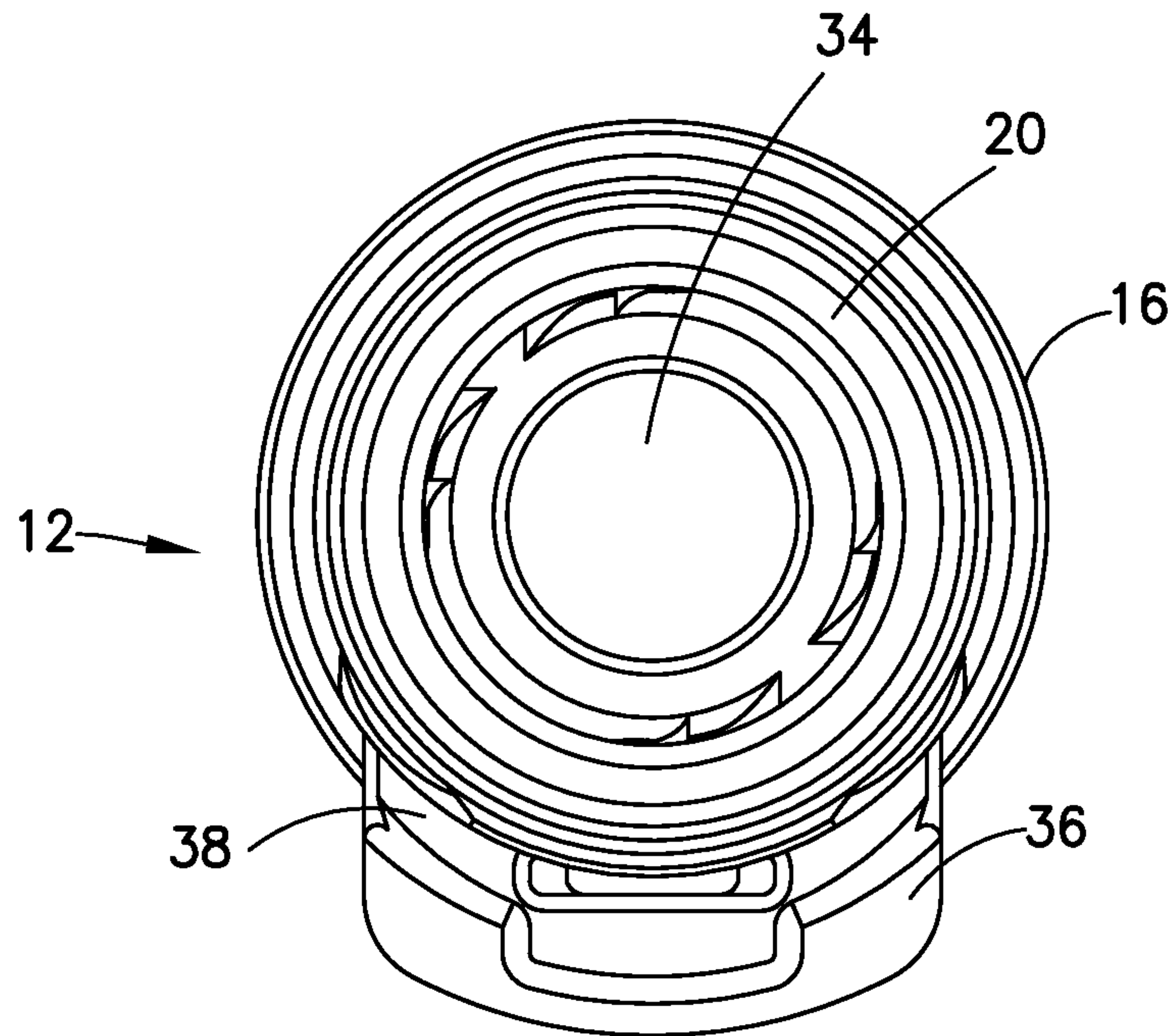
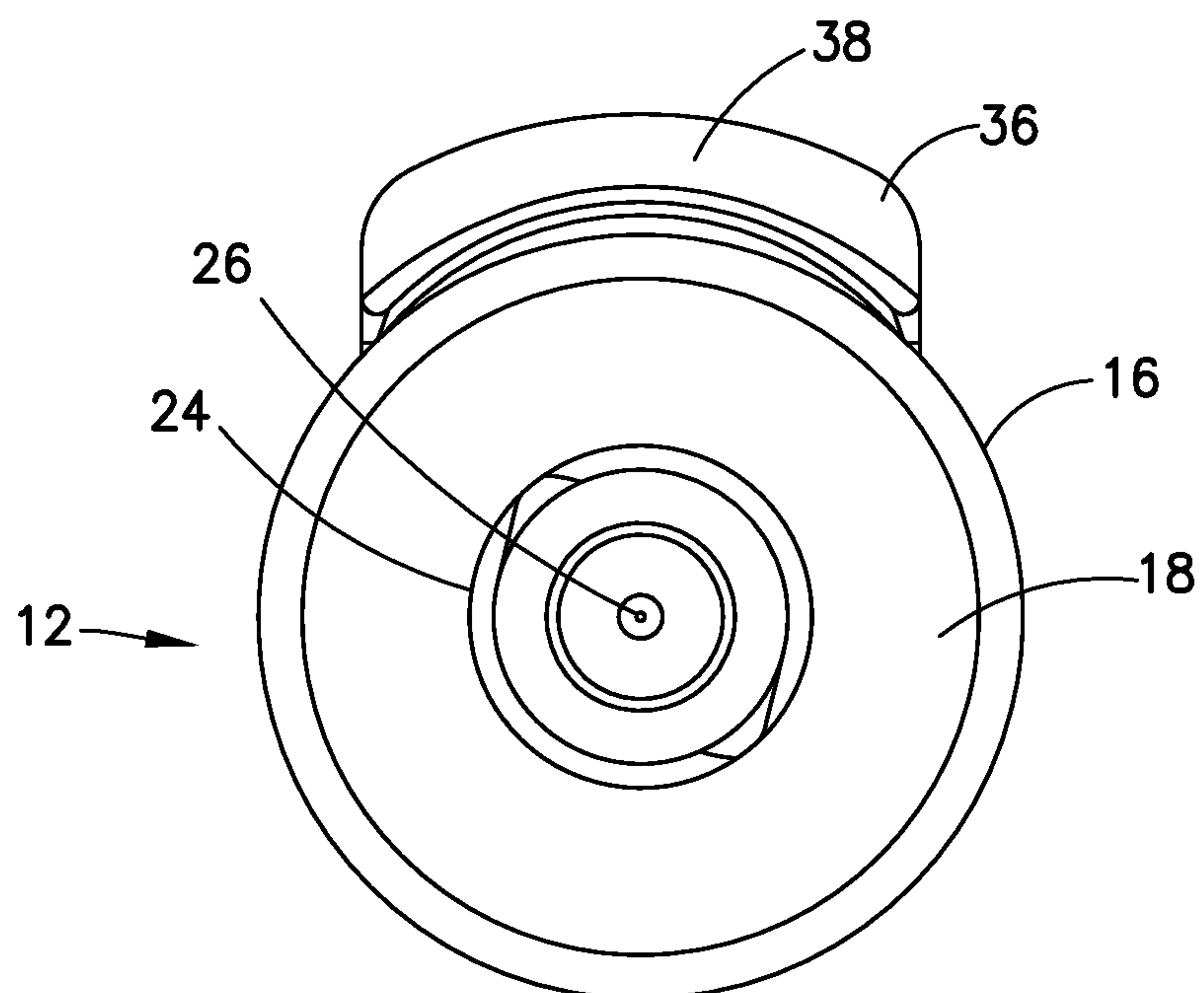


FIG.5

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**FIG. 6****FIG. 7**

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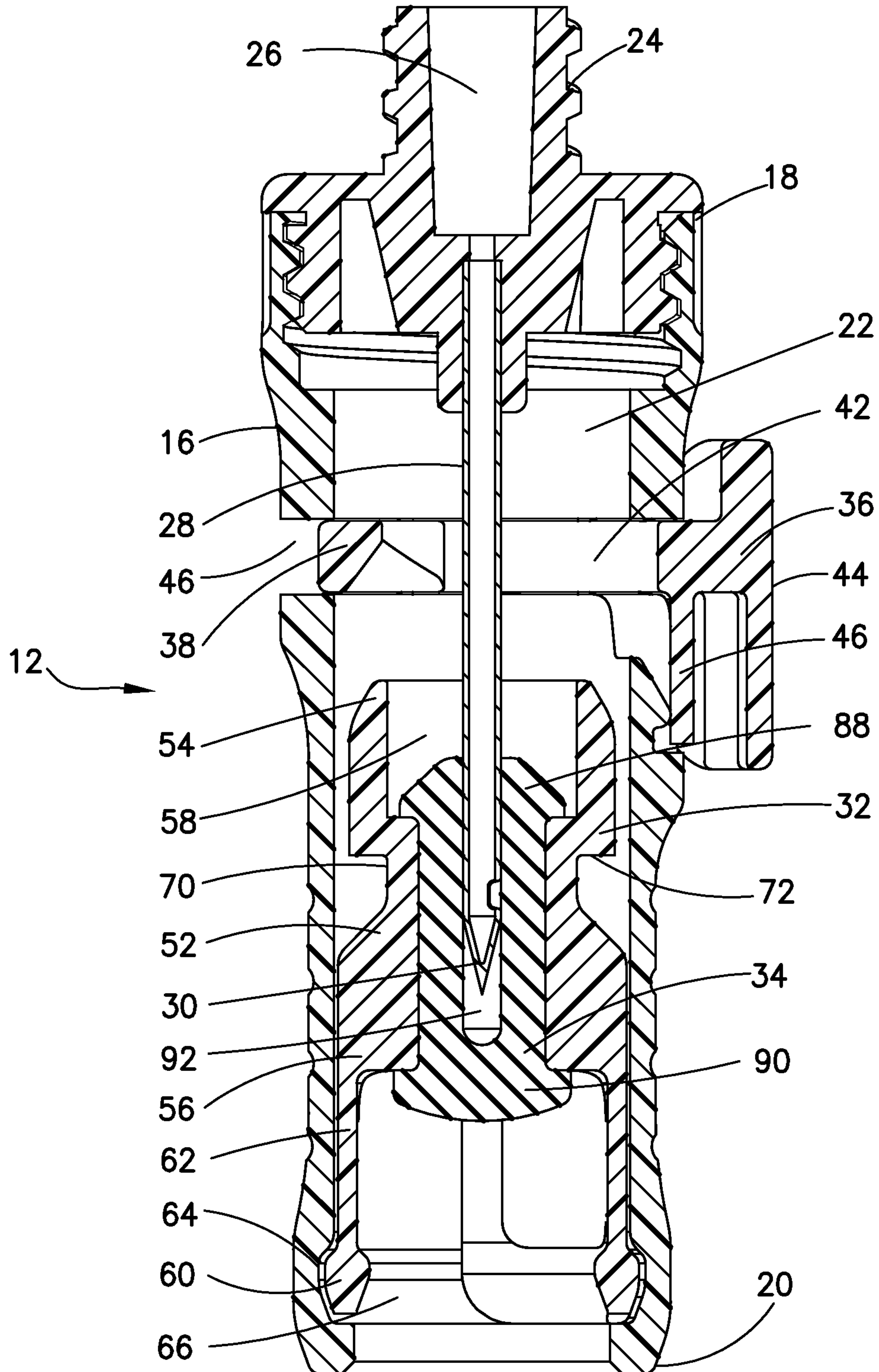
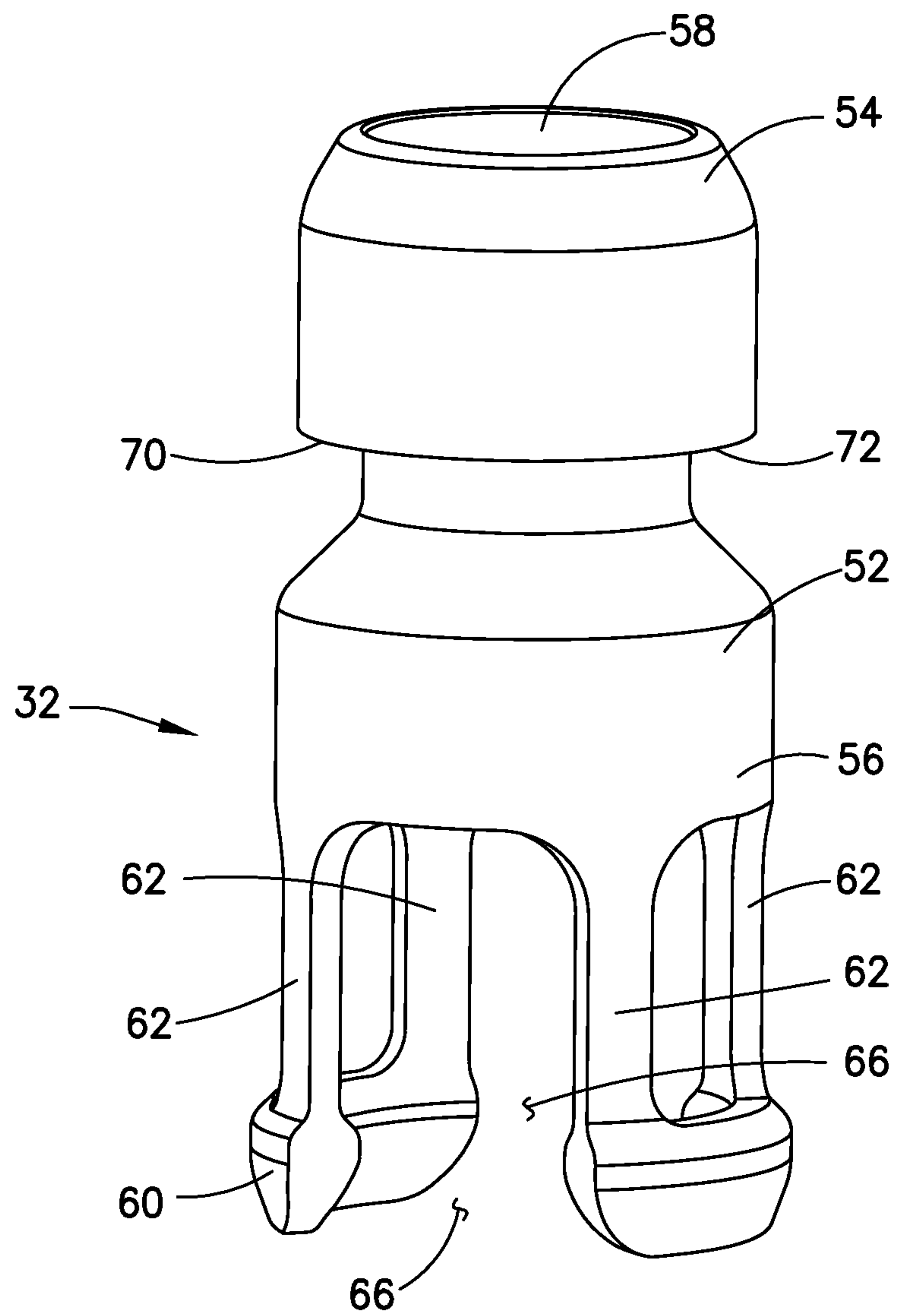


FIG. 8

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**FIG. 9**

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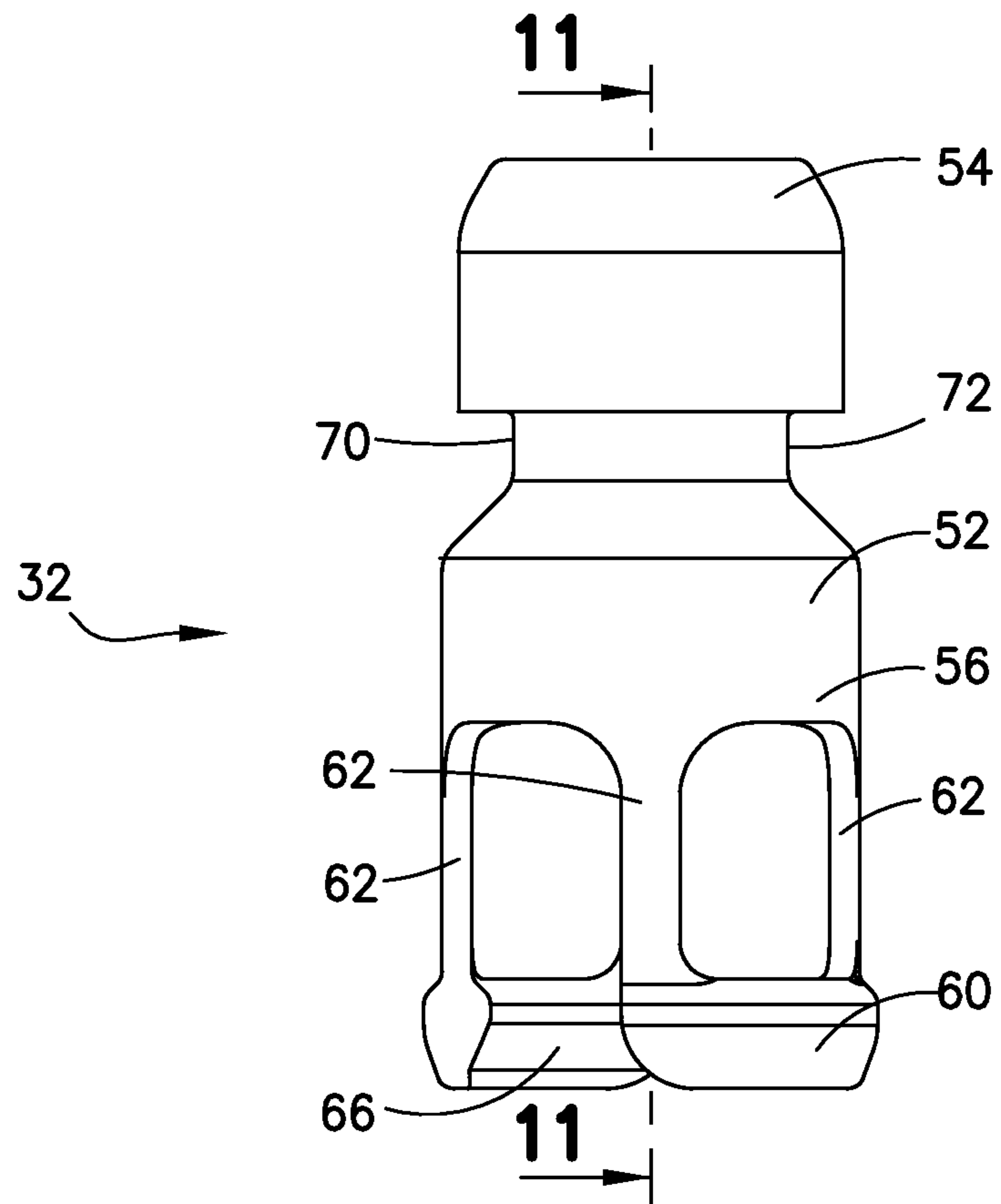


FIG. 10

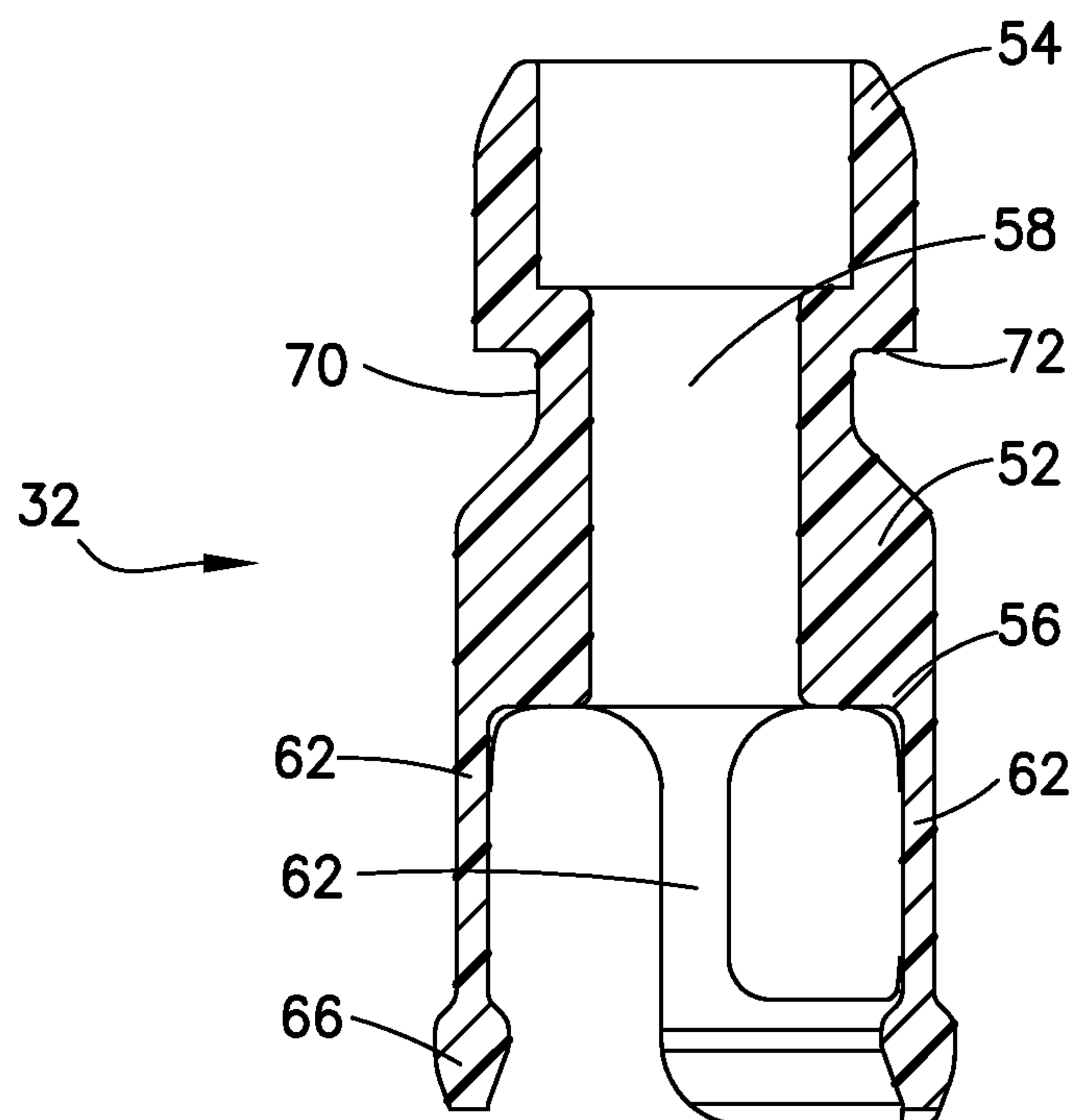


FIG. 11

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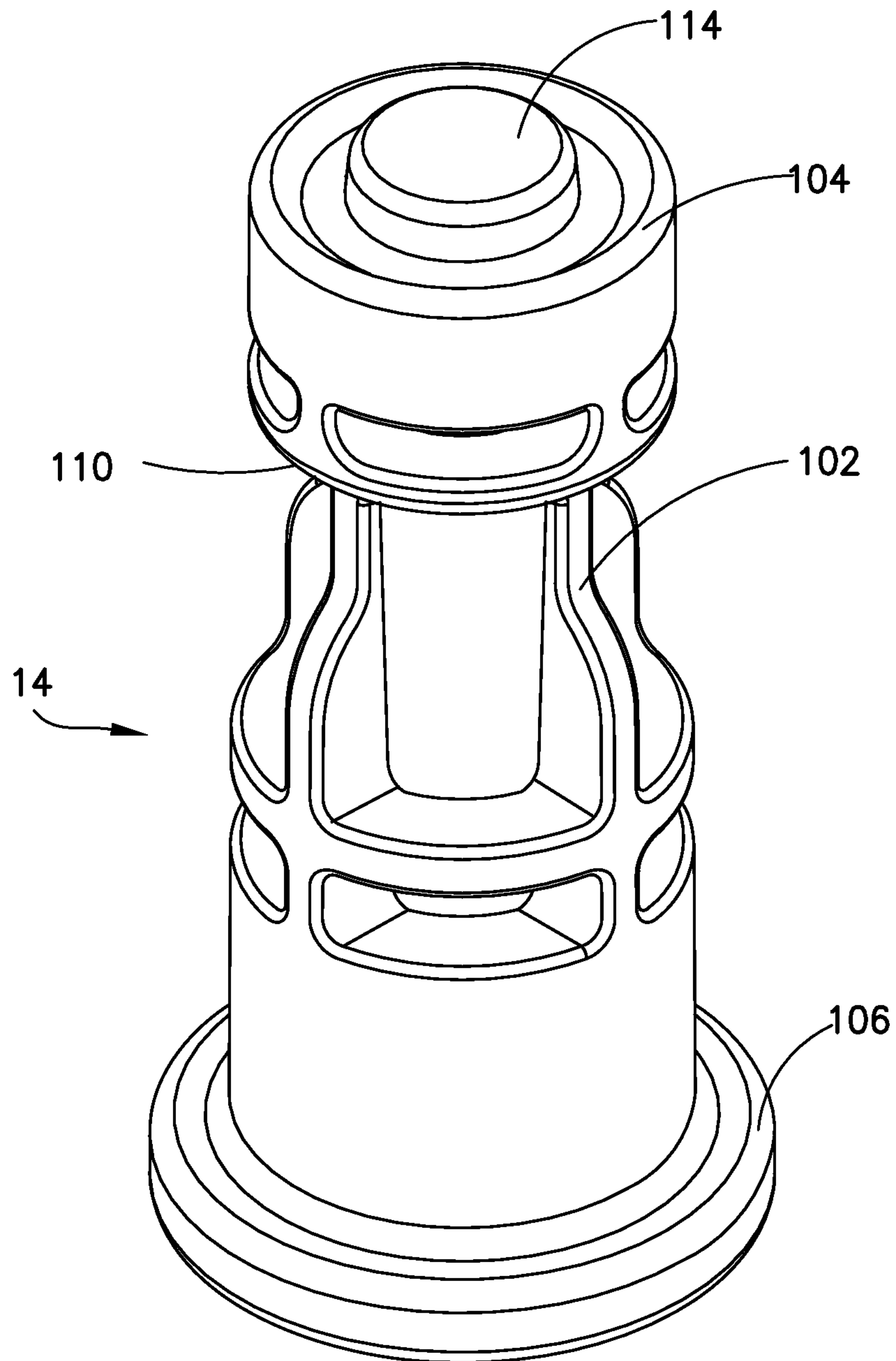


FIG. 12

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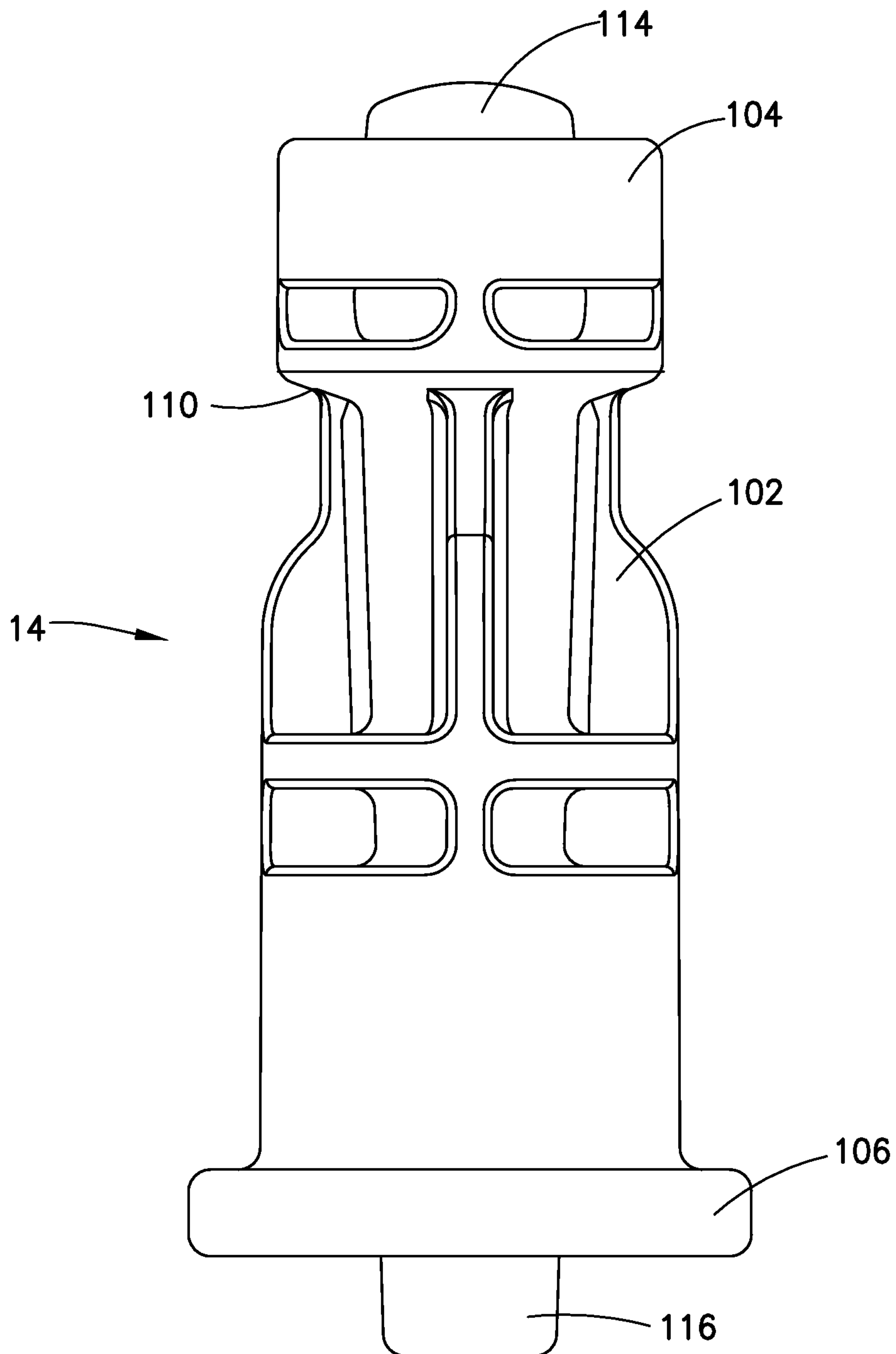
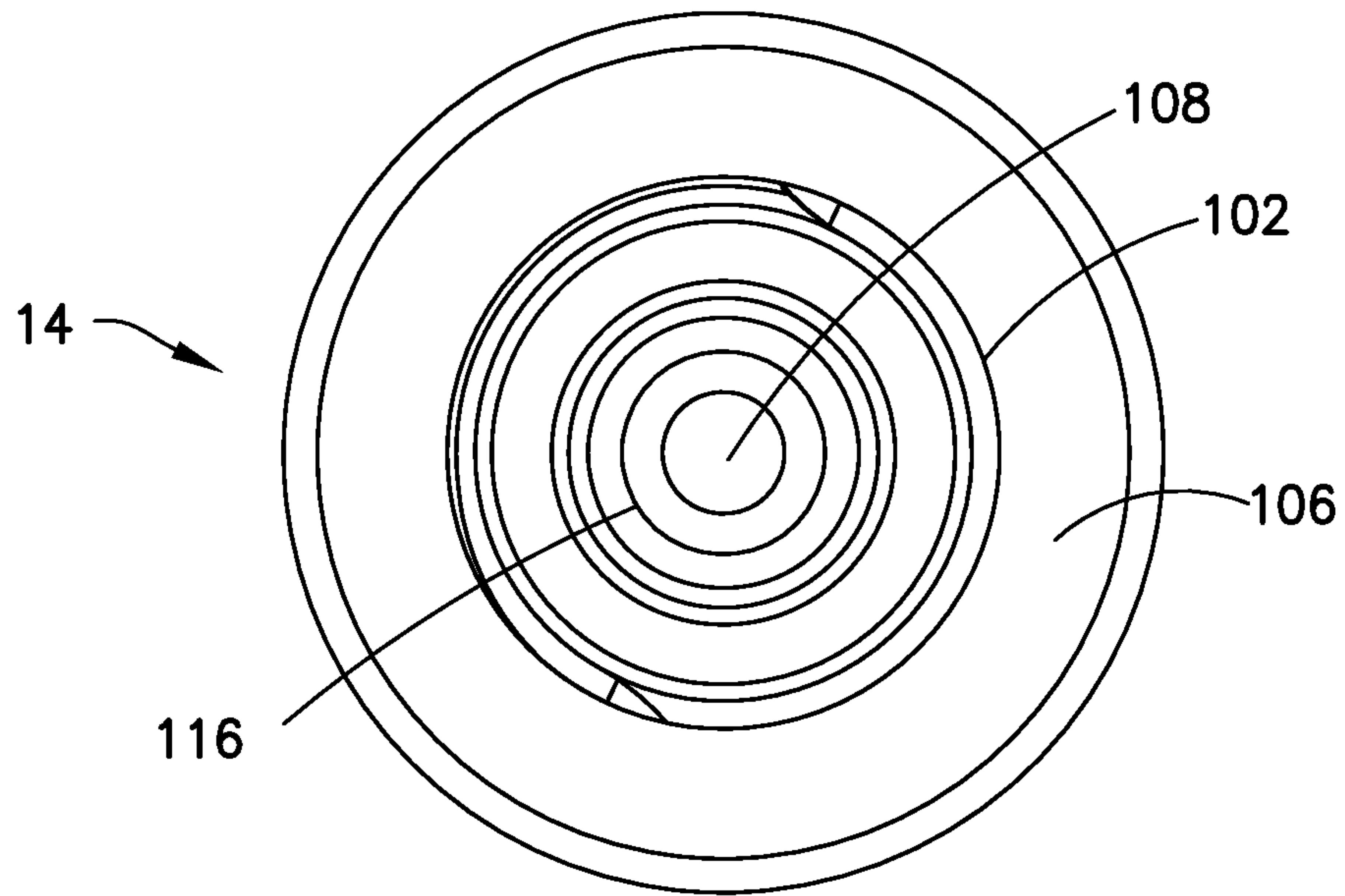
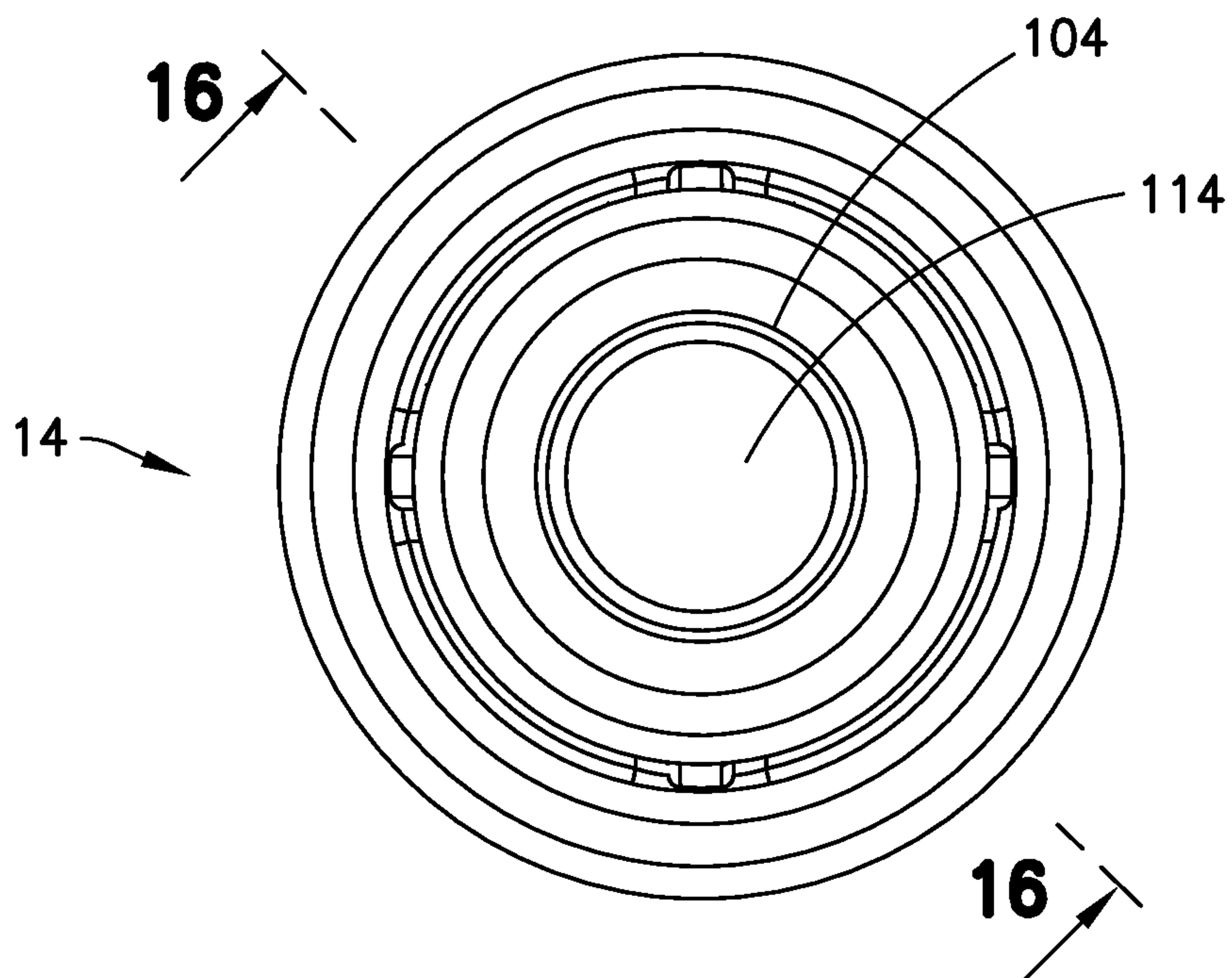


FIG. 13

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**FIG. 14****FIG. 15**

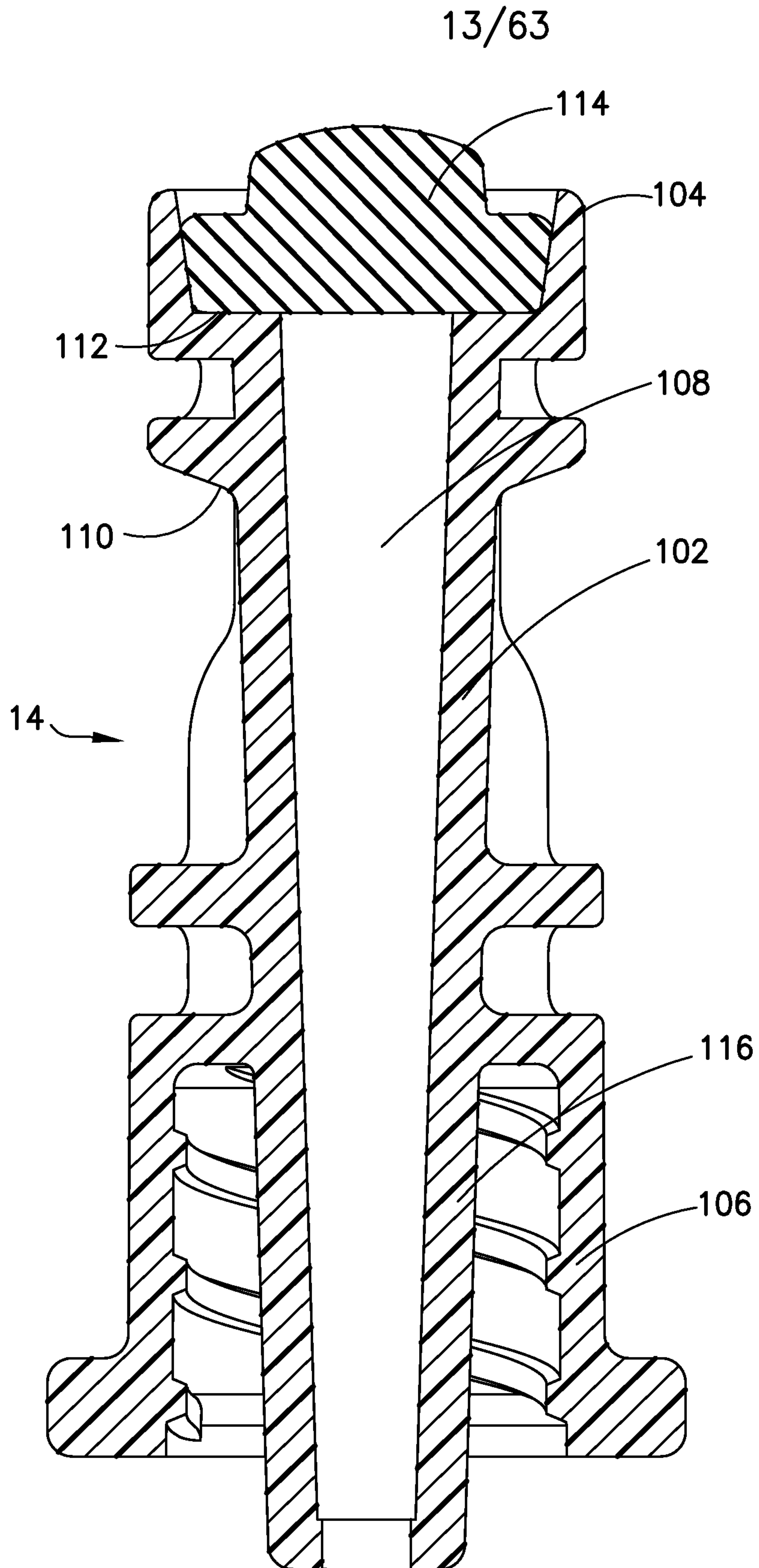


FIG.16

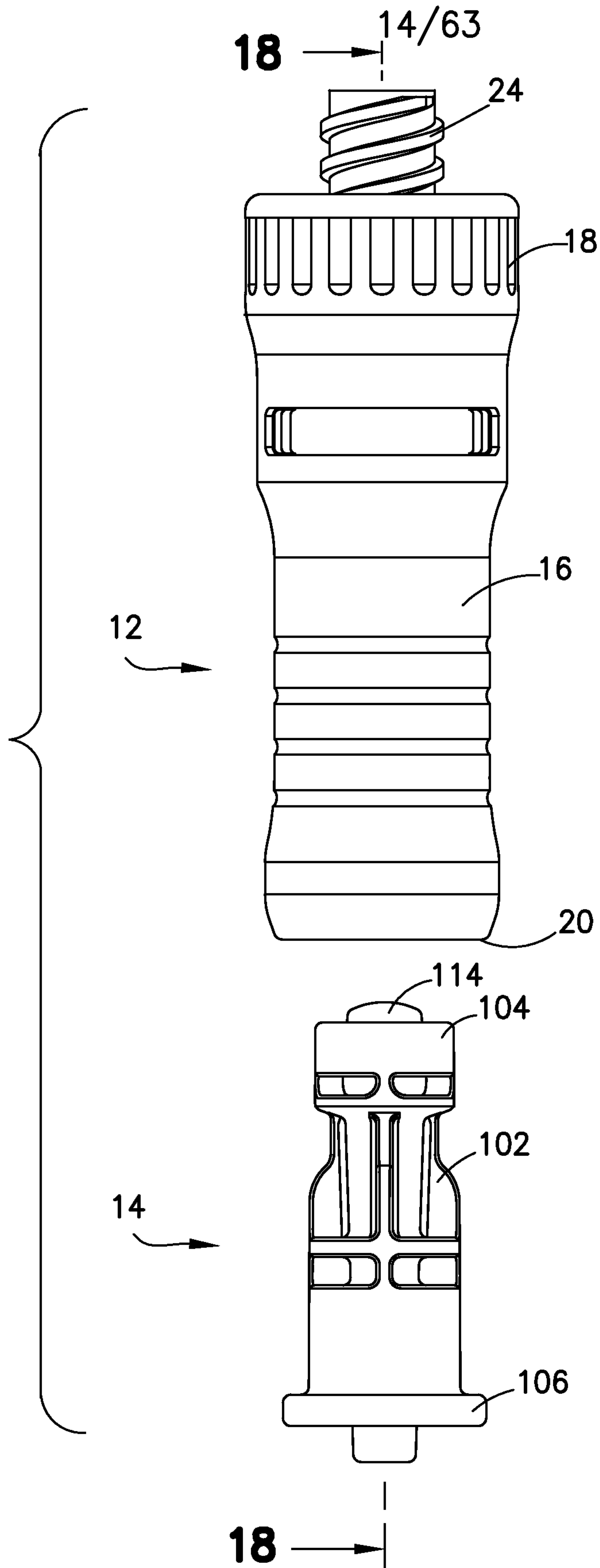


FIG.17

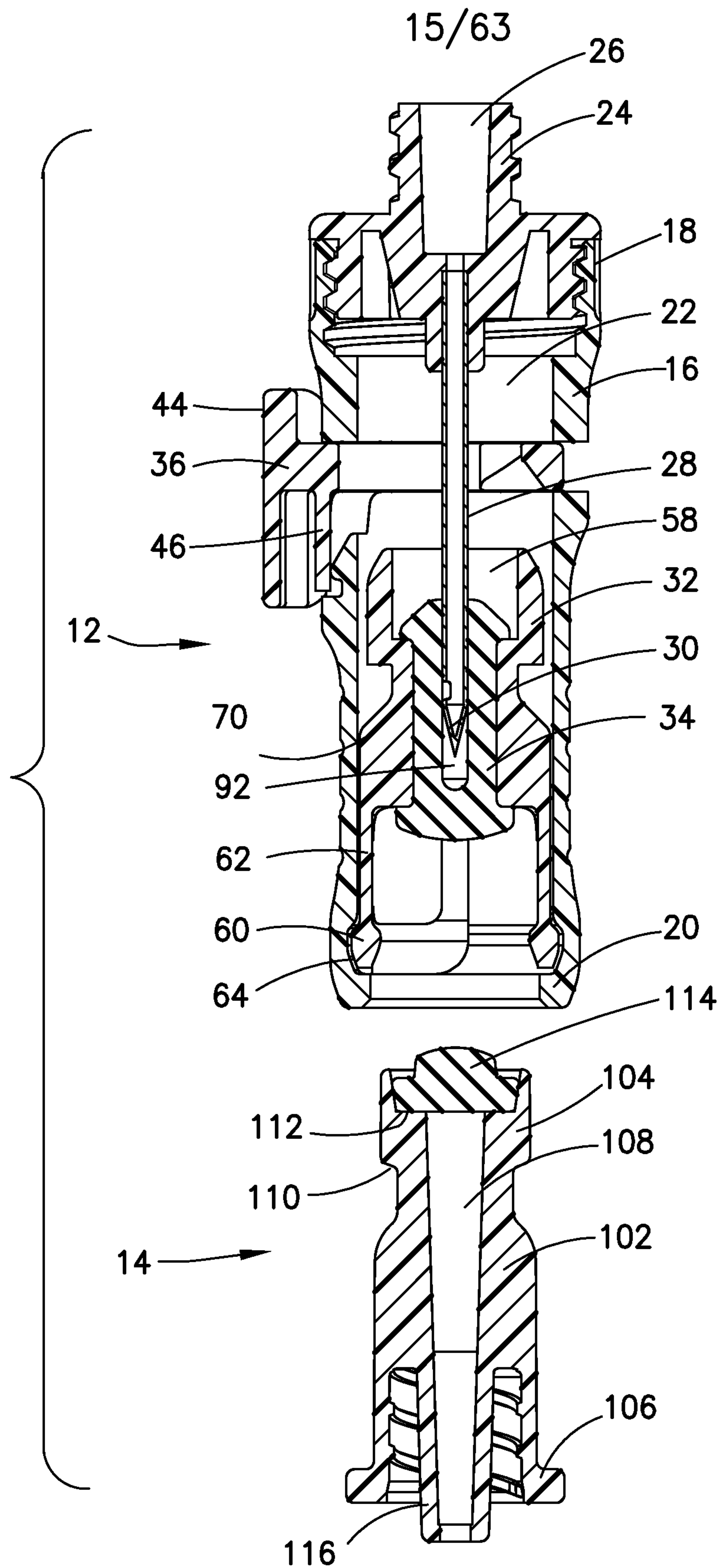


FIG. 18

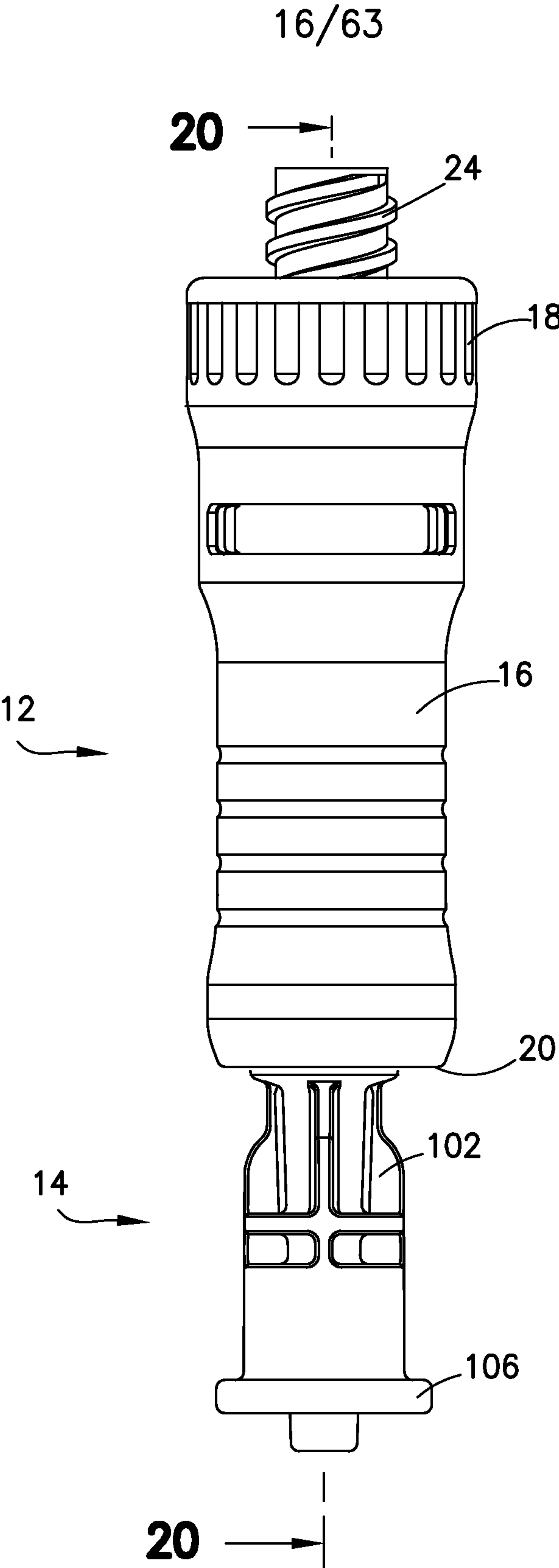


FIG.19

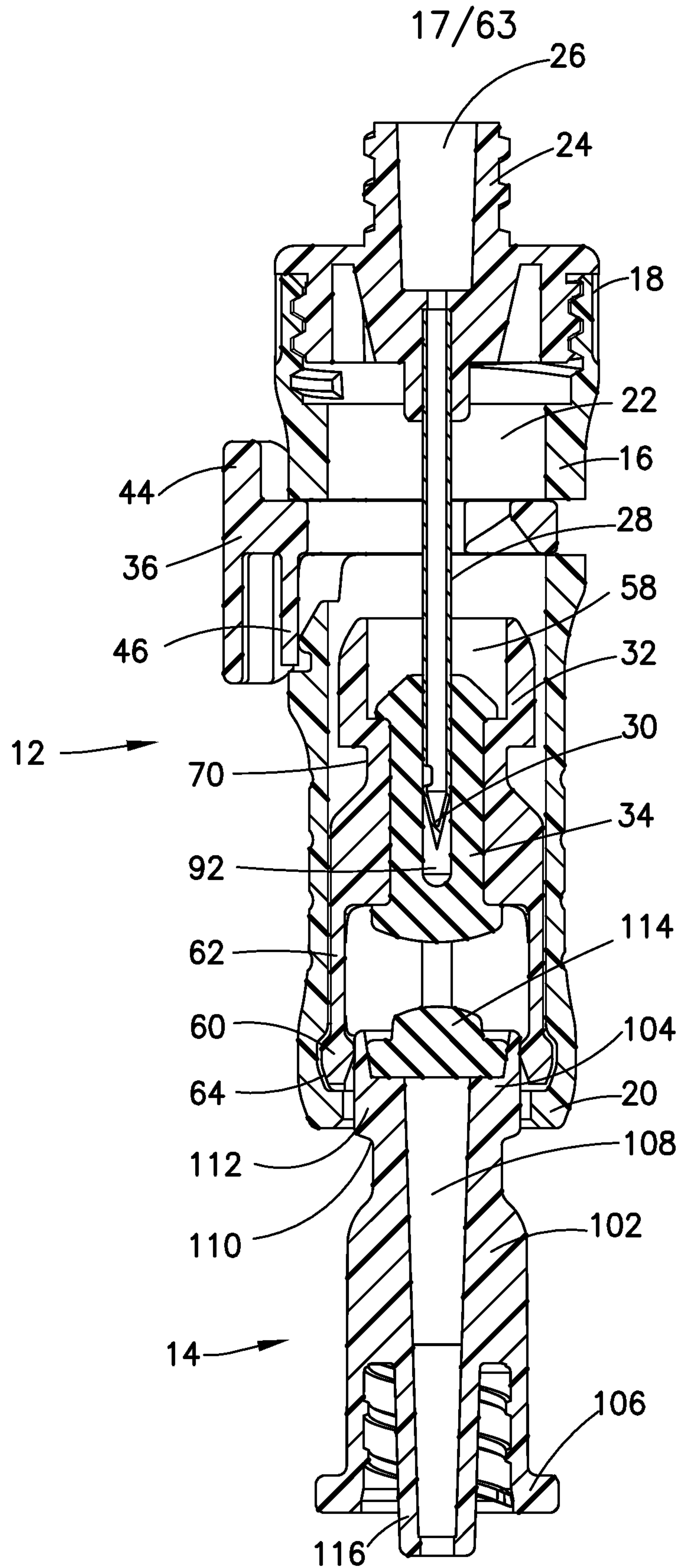


FIG.20

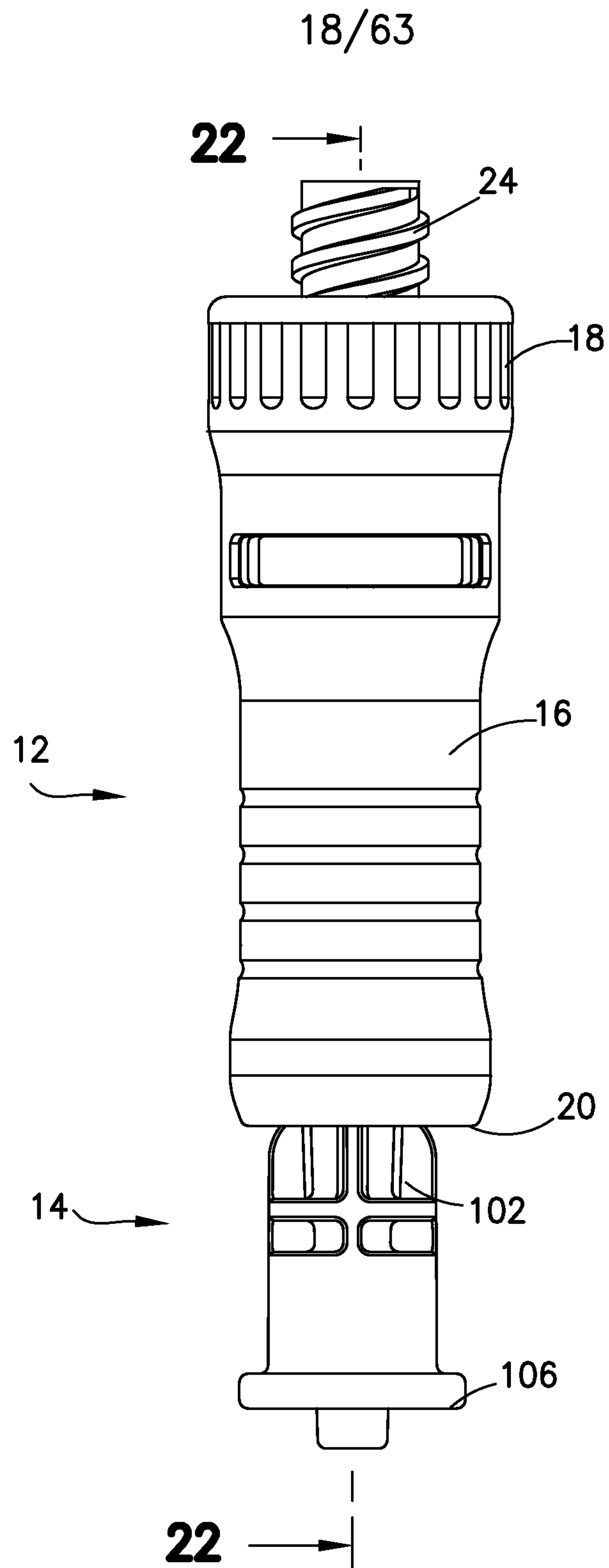


FIG.21

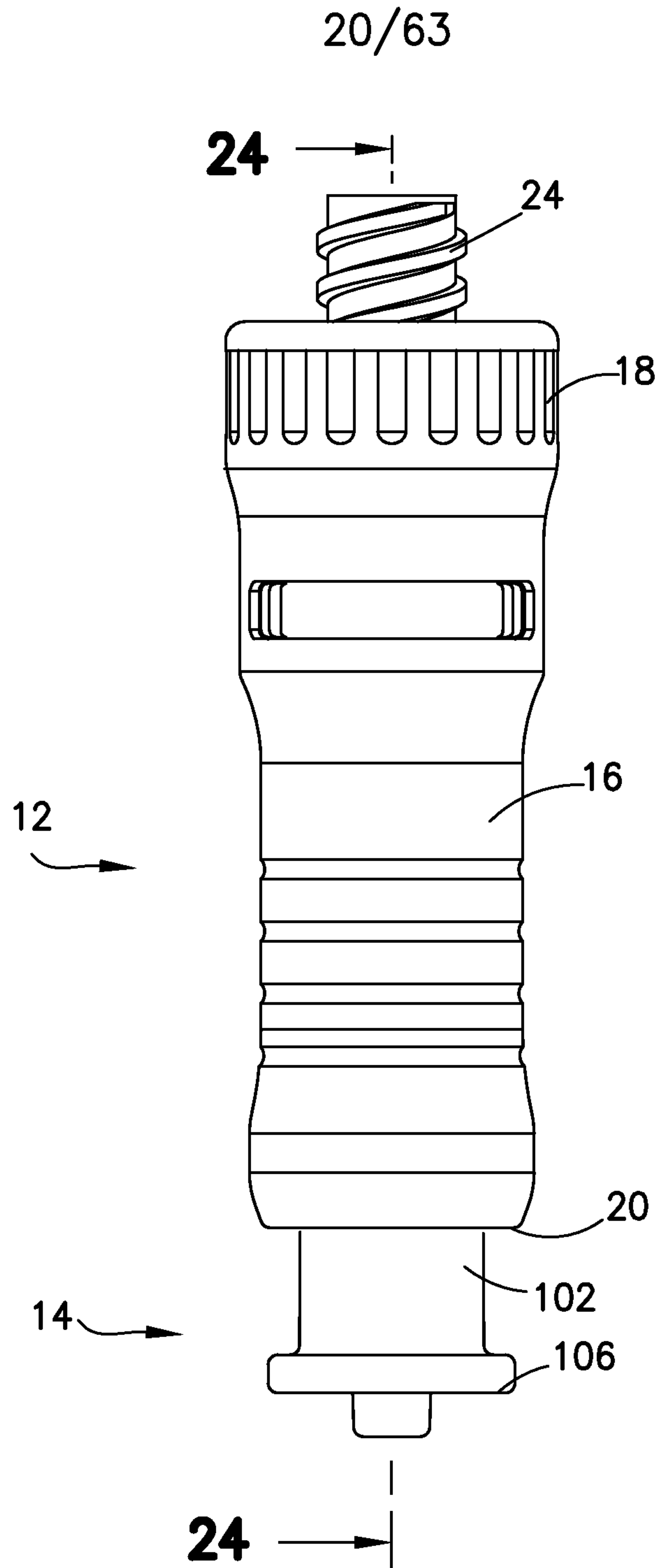


FIG.23

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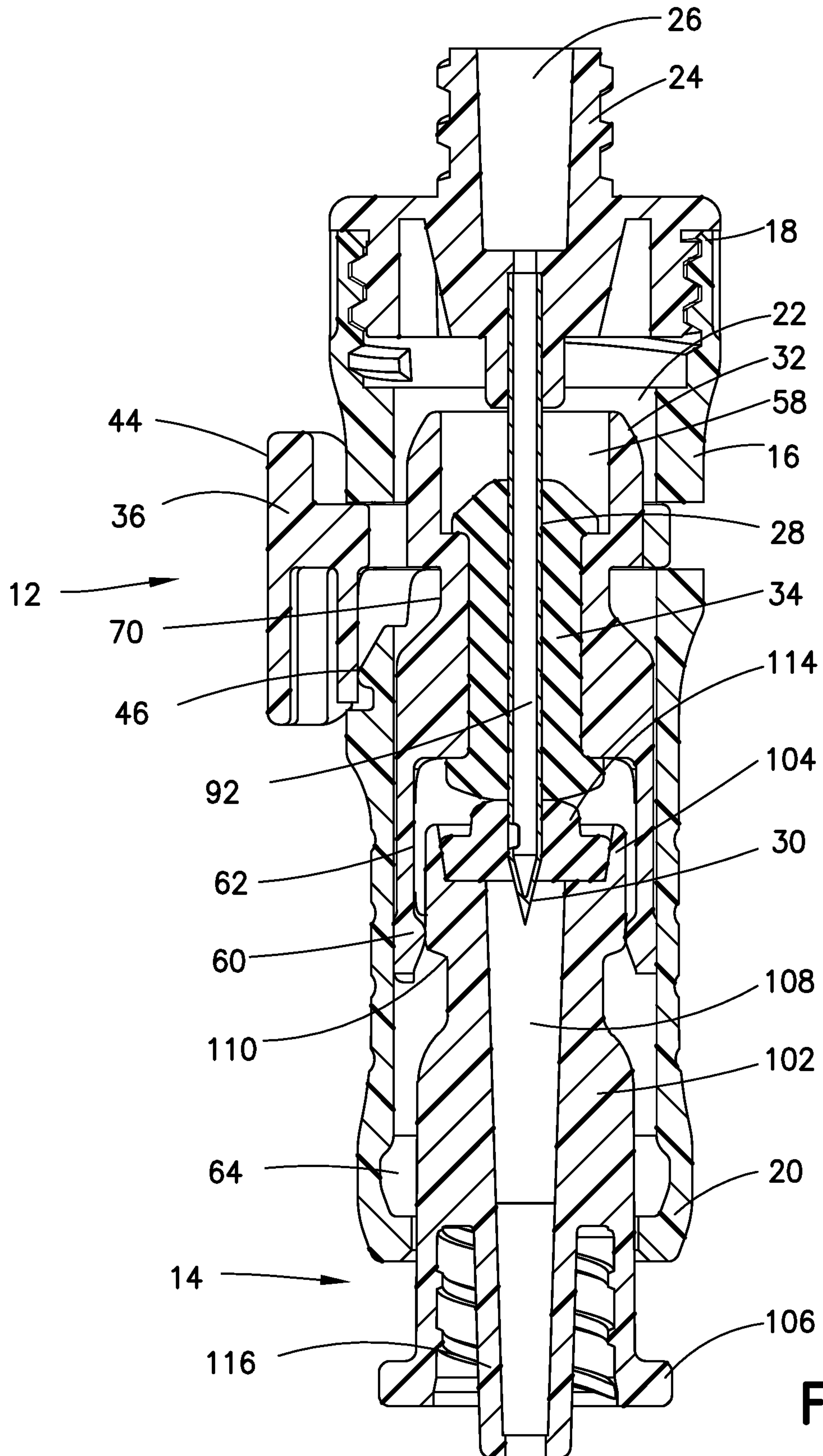


FIG. 24

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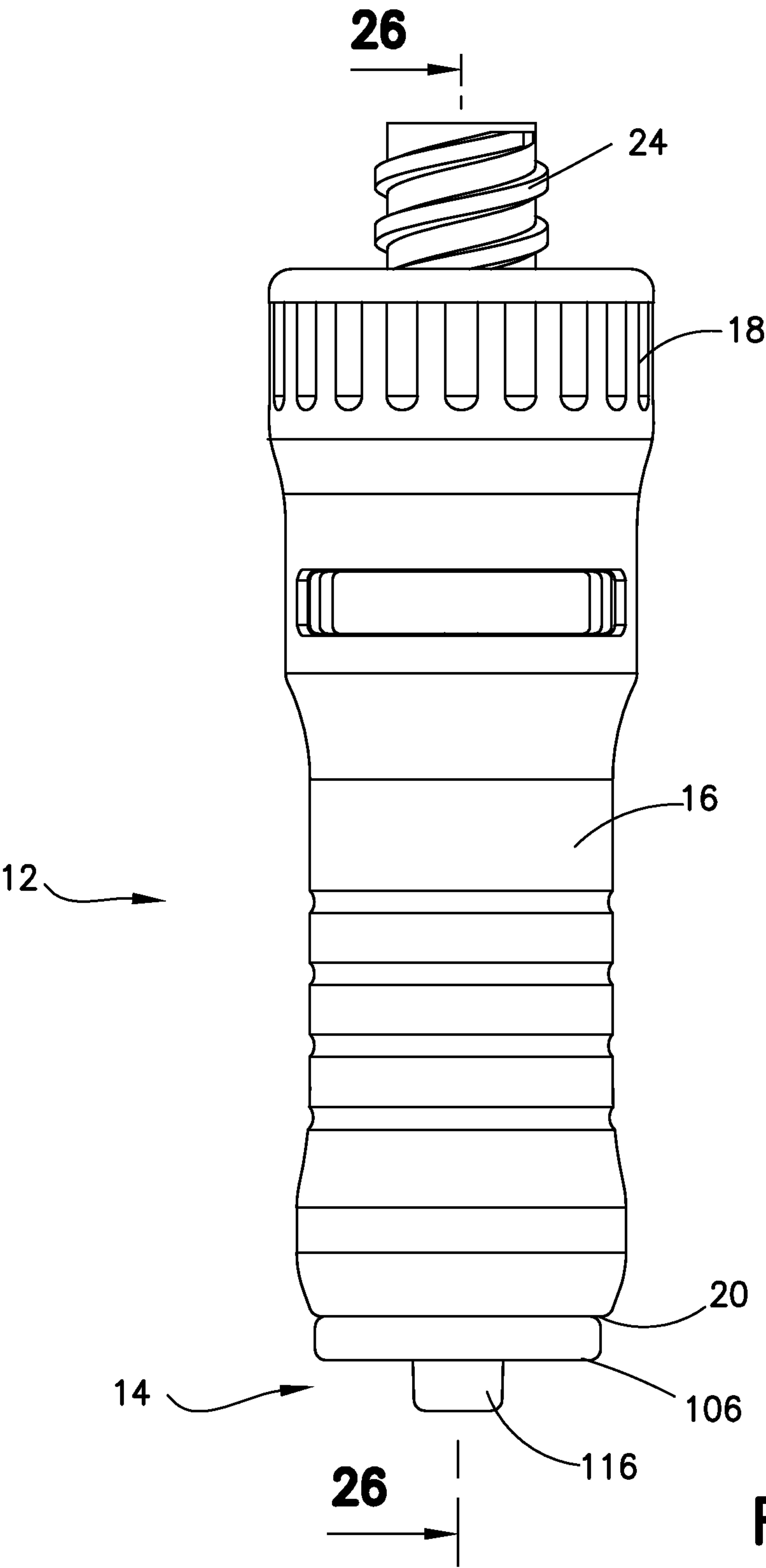


FIG.25

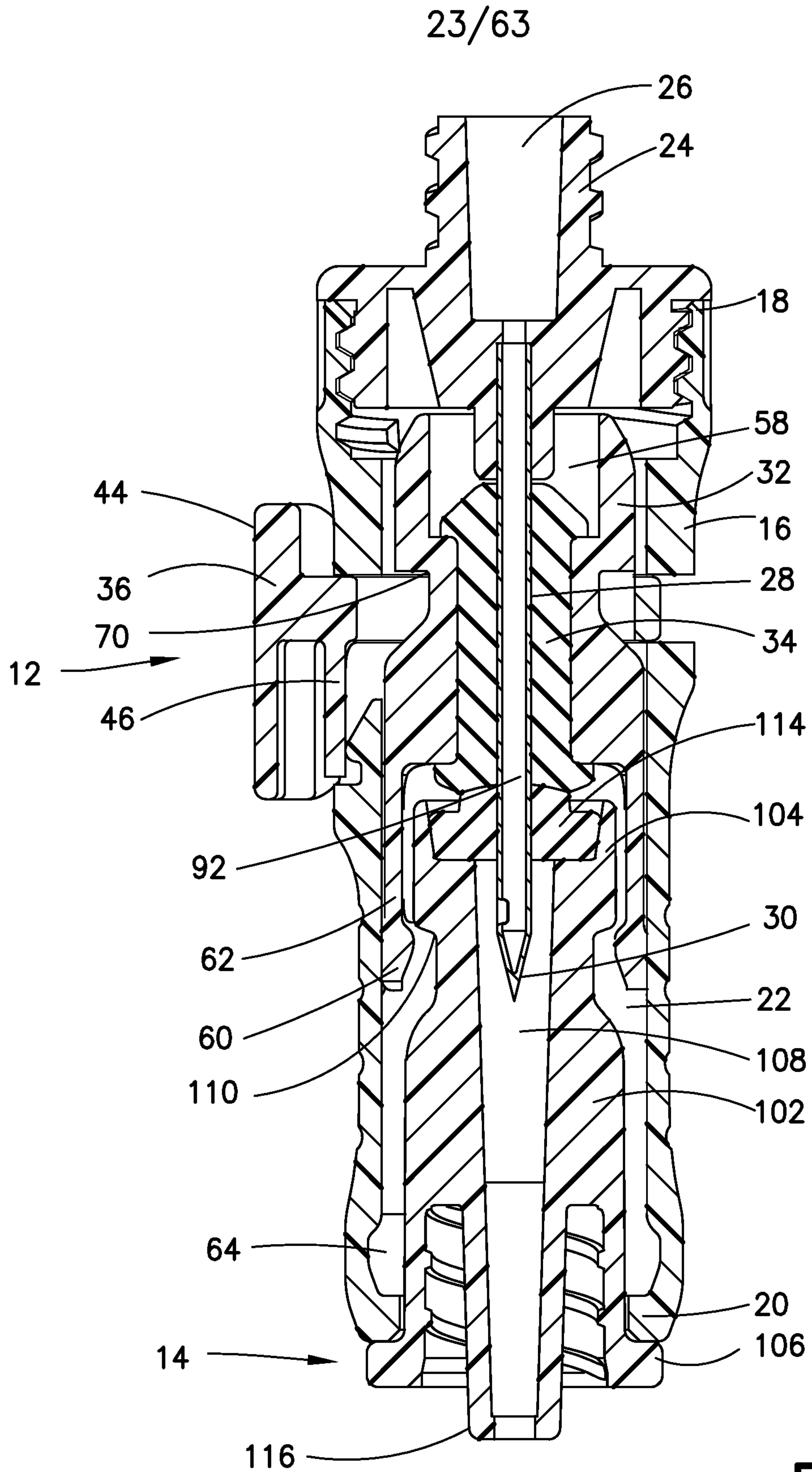


FIG. 26

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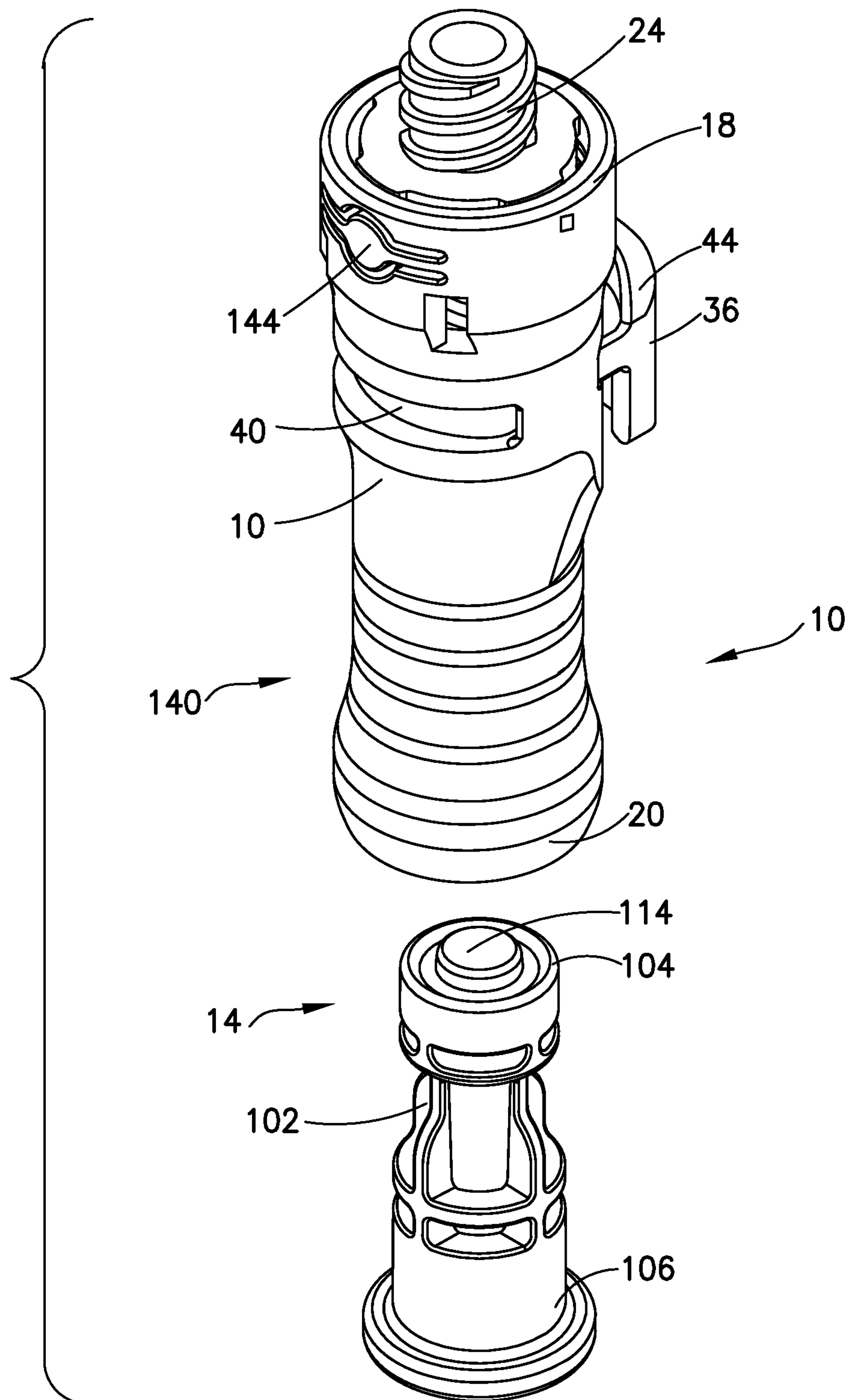
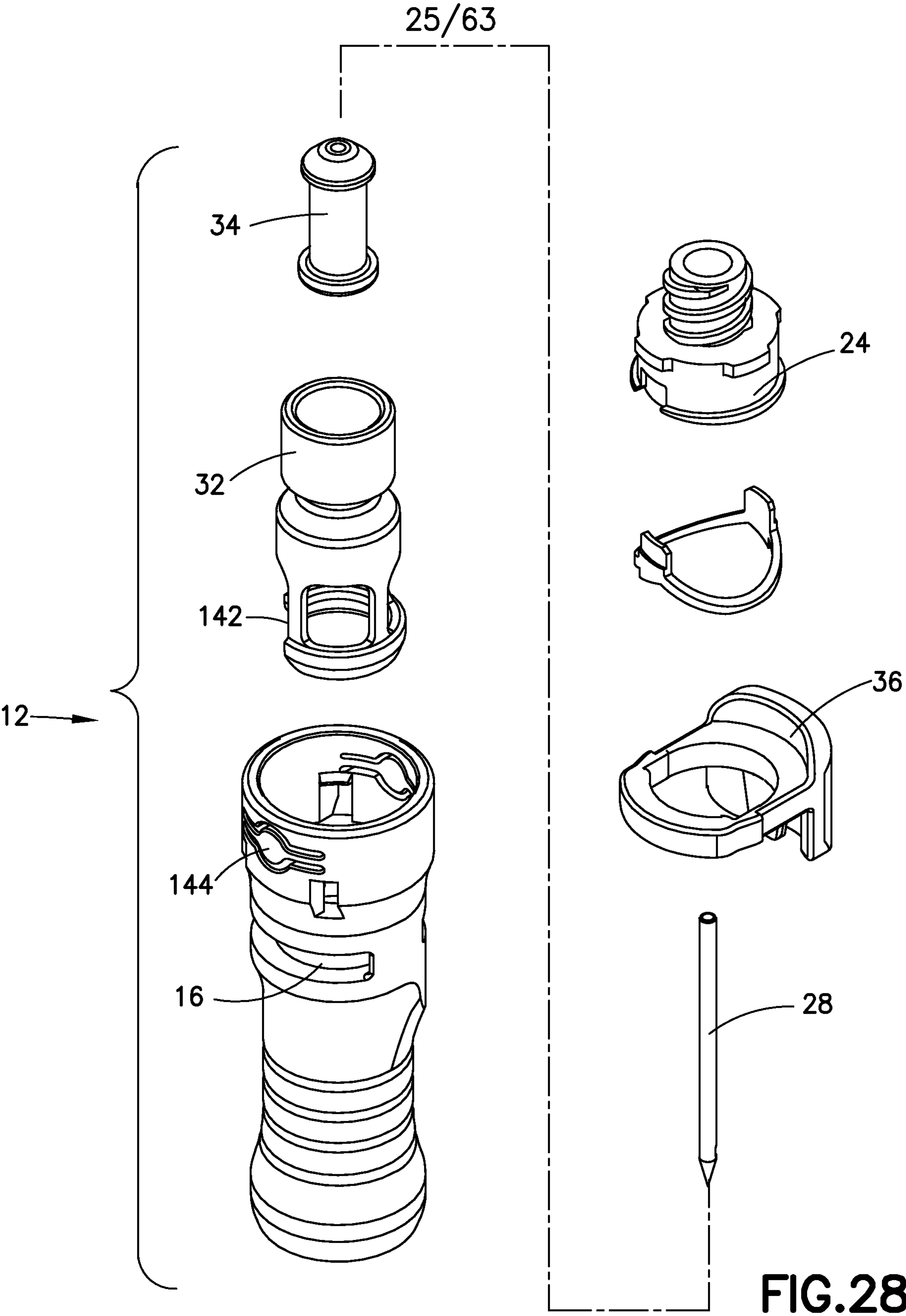


FIG.27



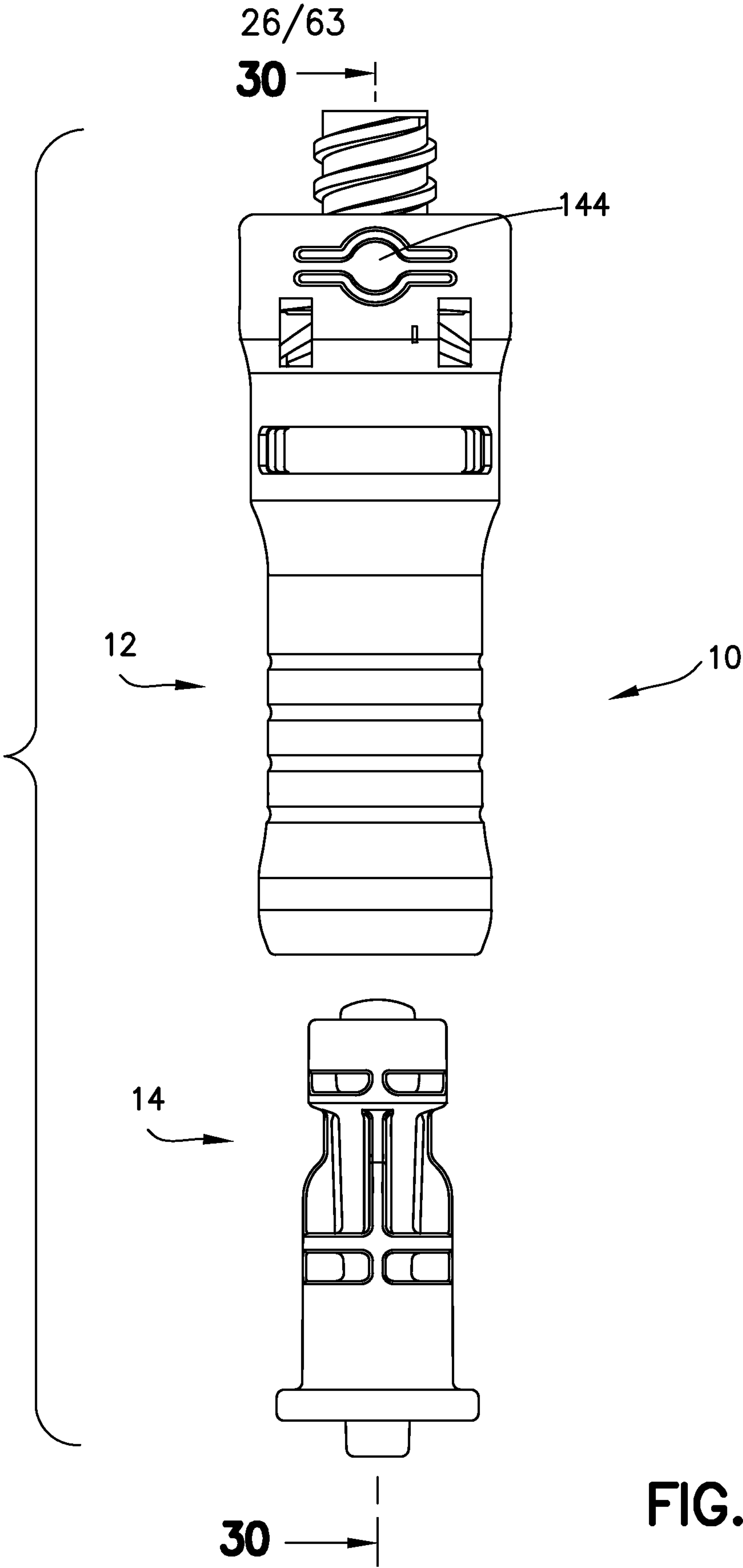
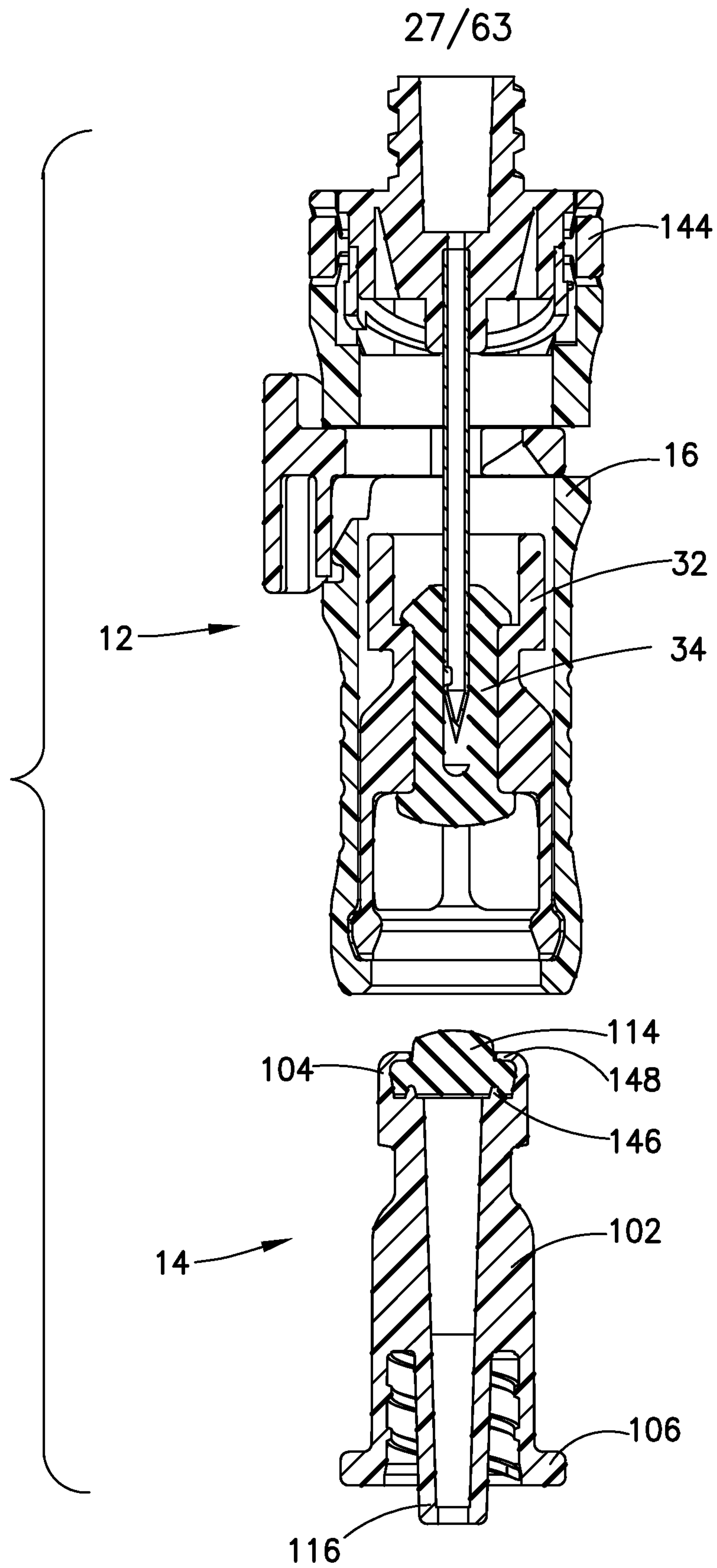


FIG.29



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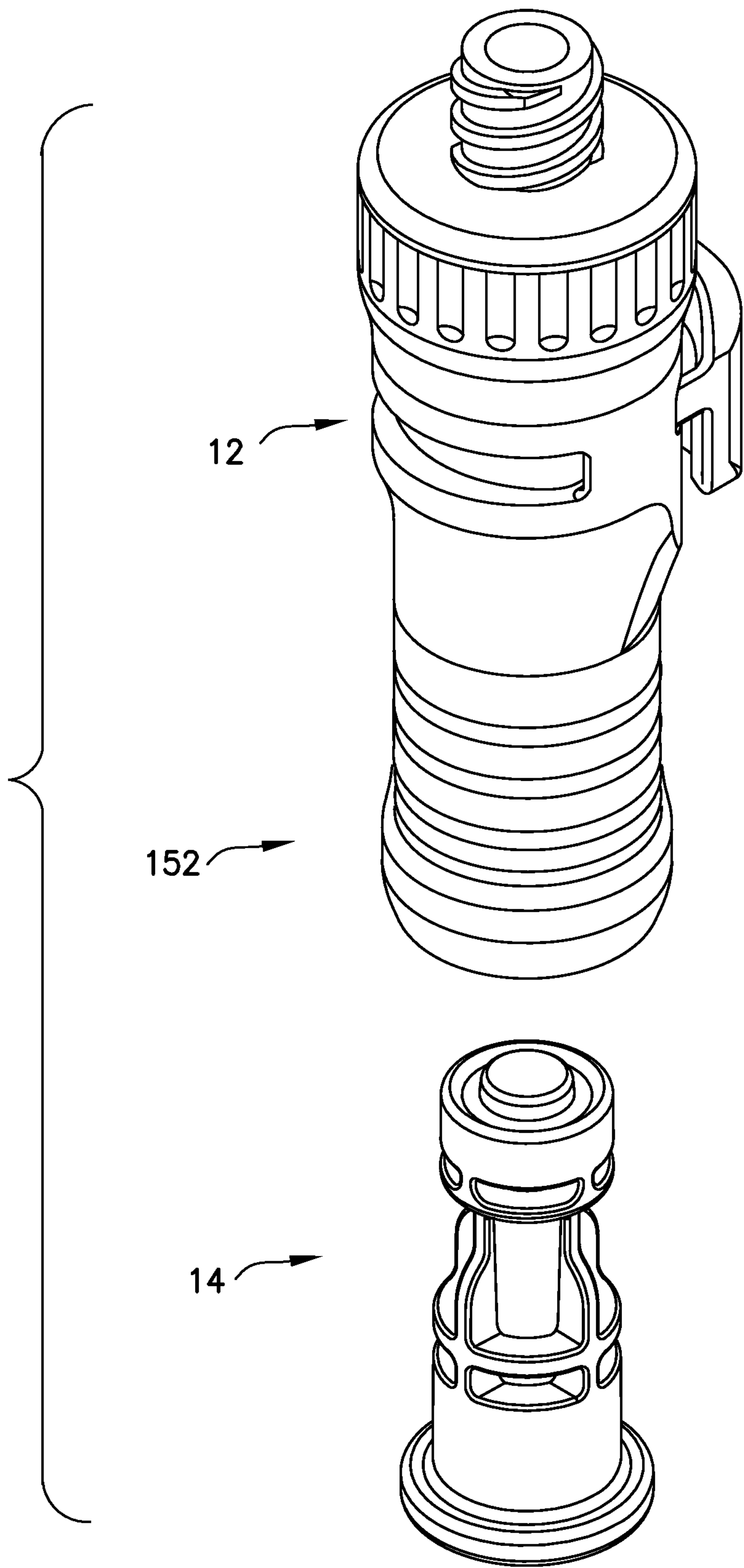


FIG.31

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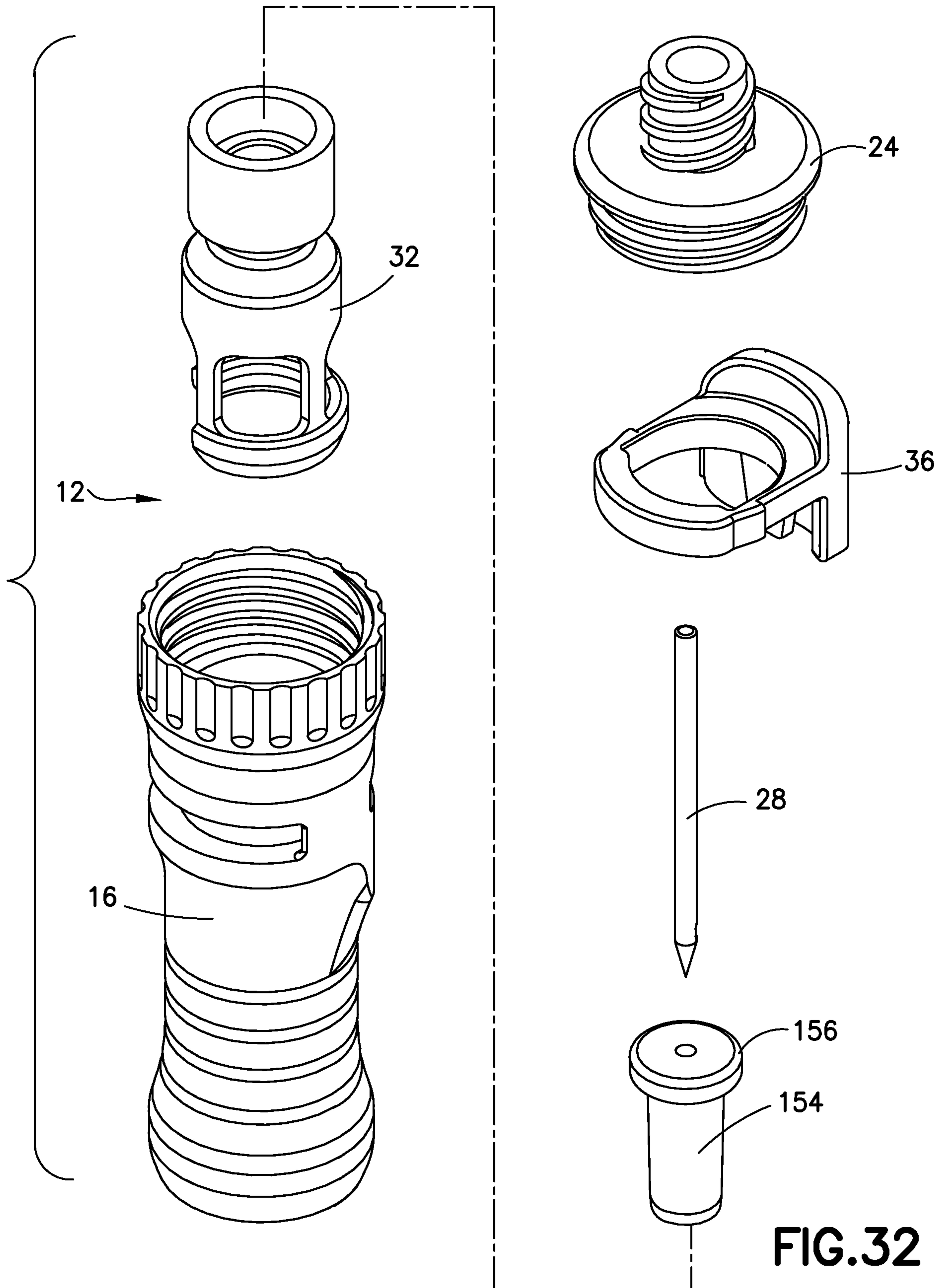


FIG.32

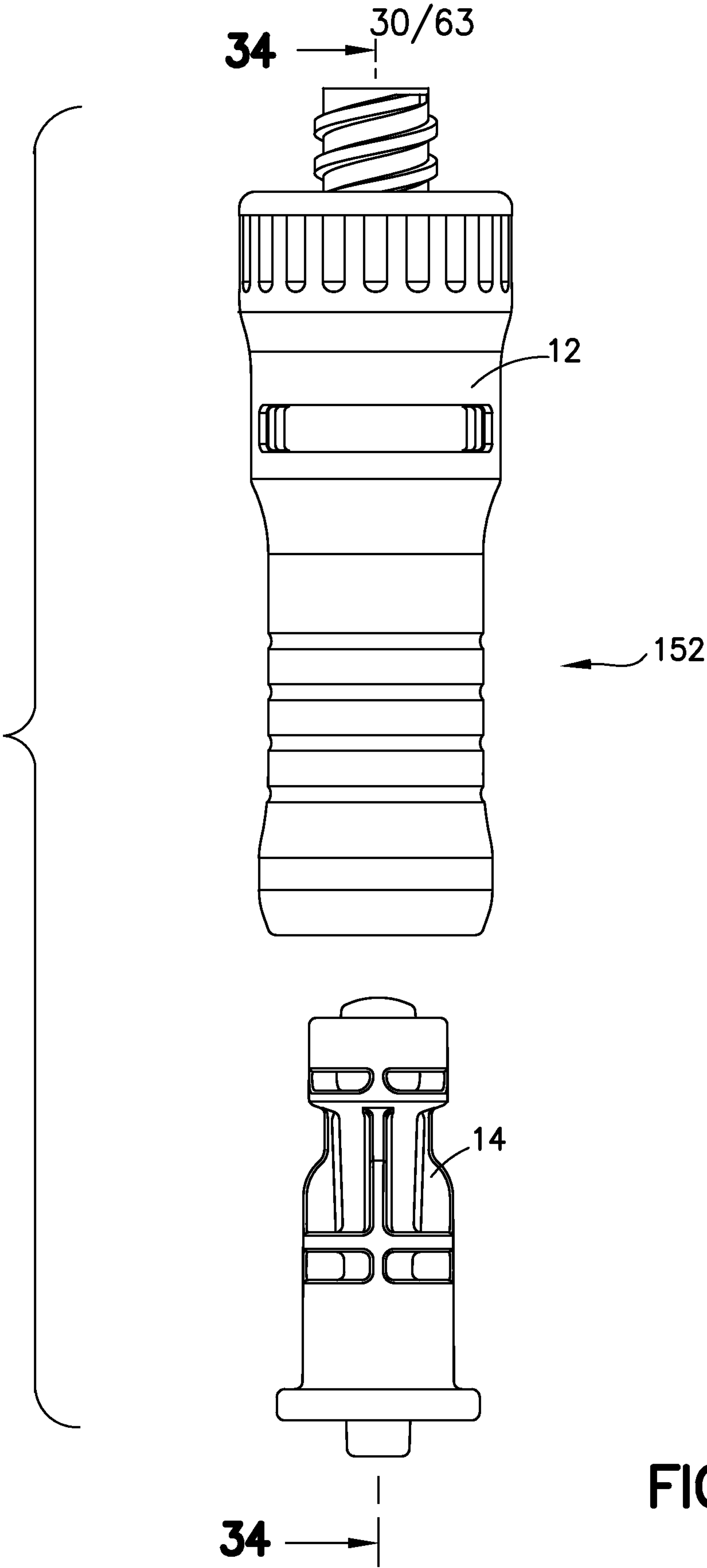


FIG.33

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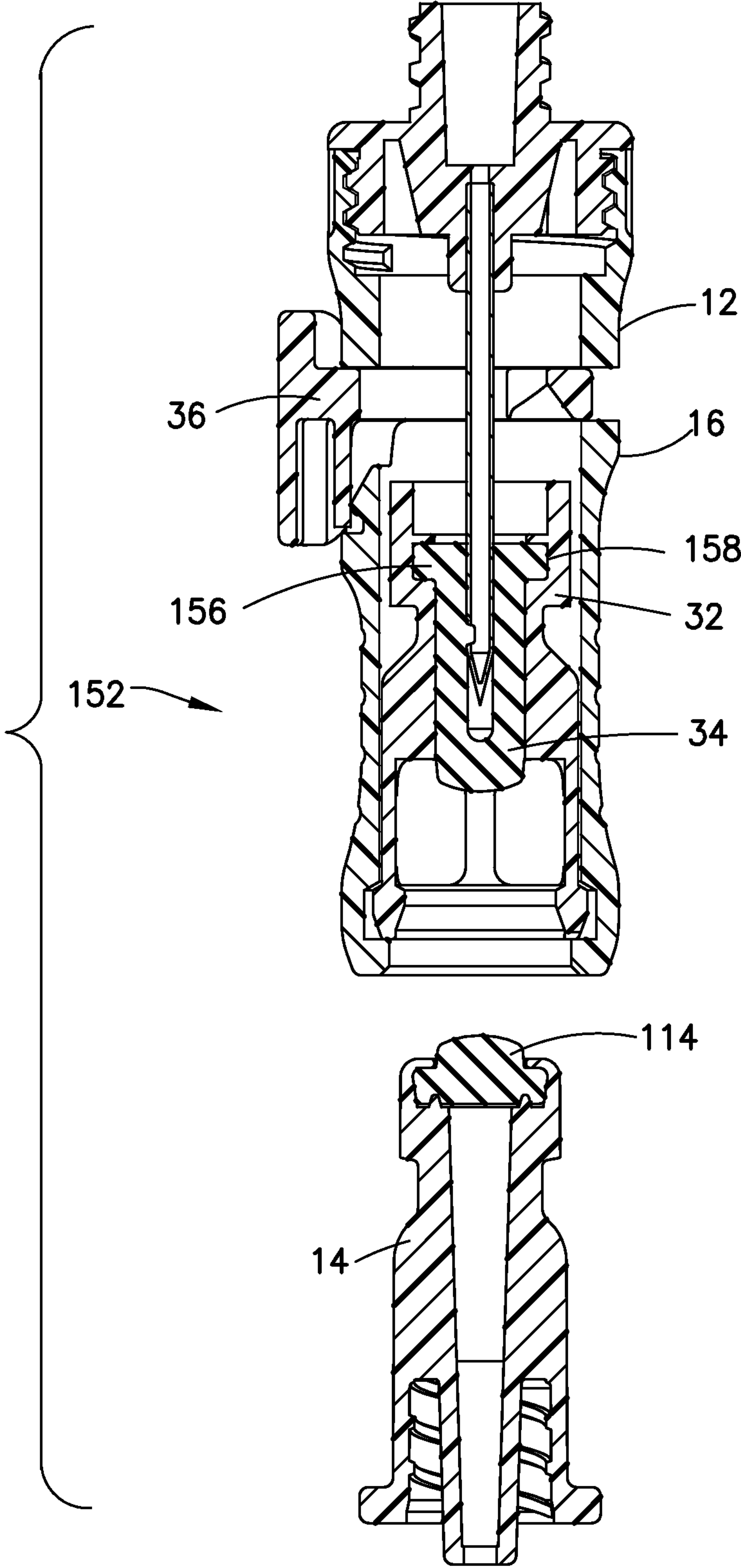


FIG.34

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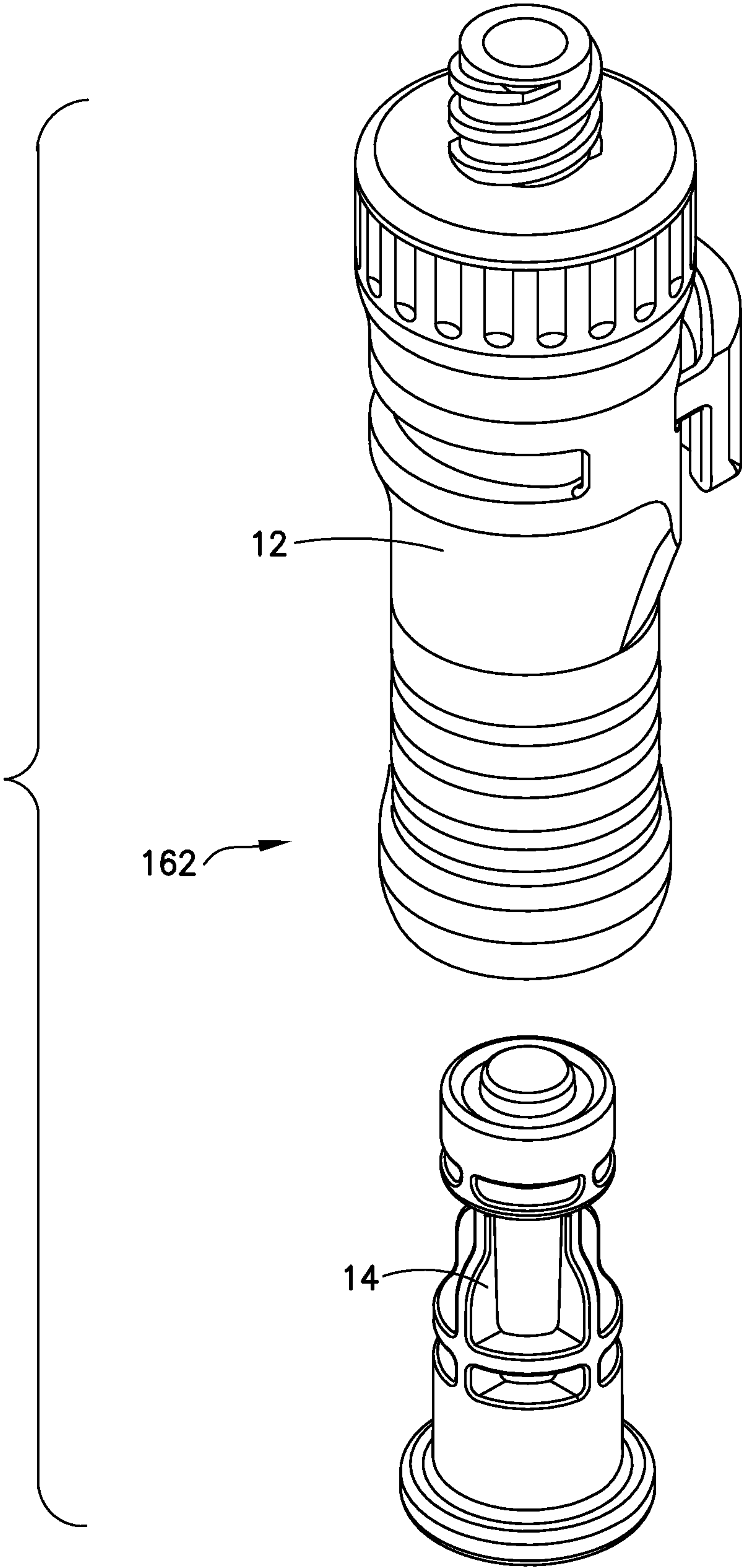
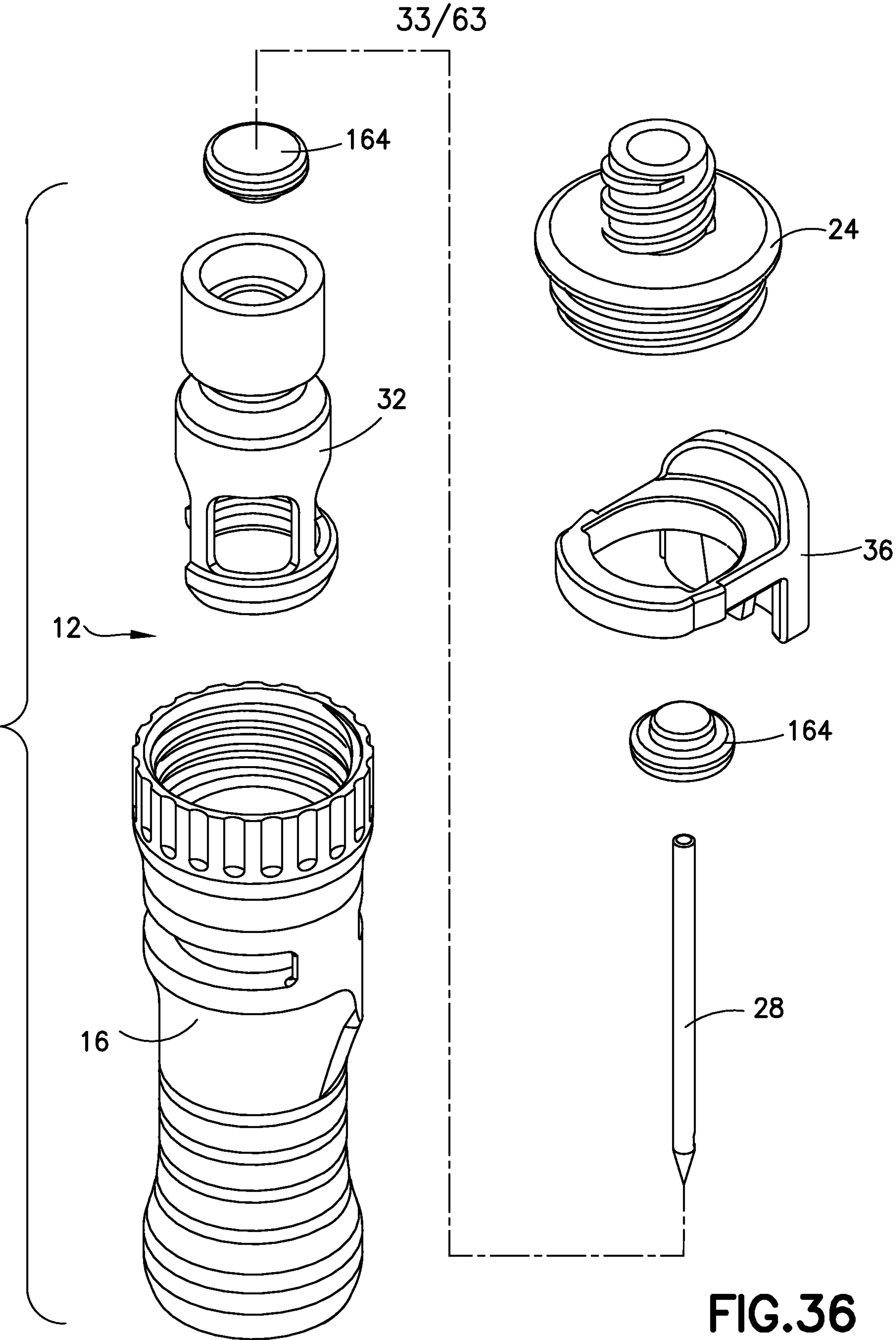


FIG.35



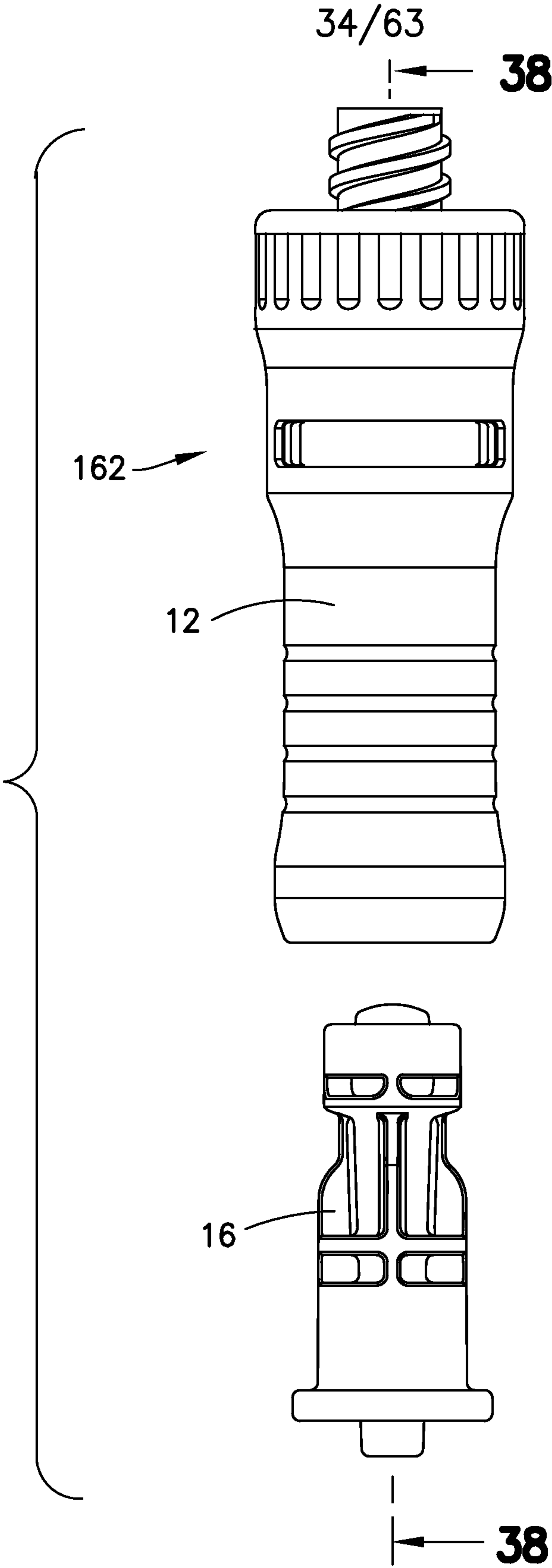


FIG.37

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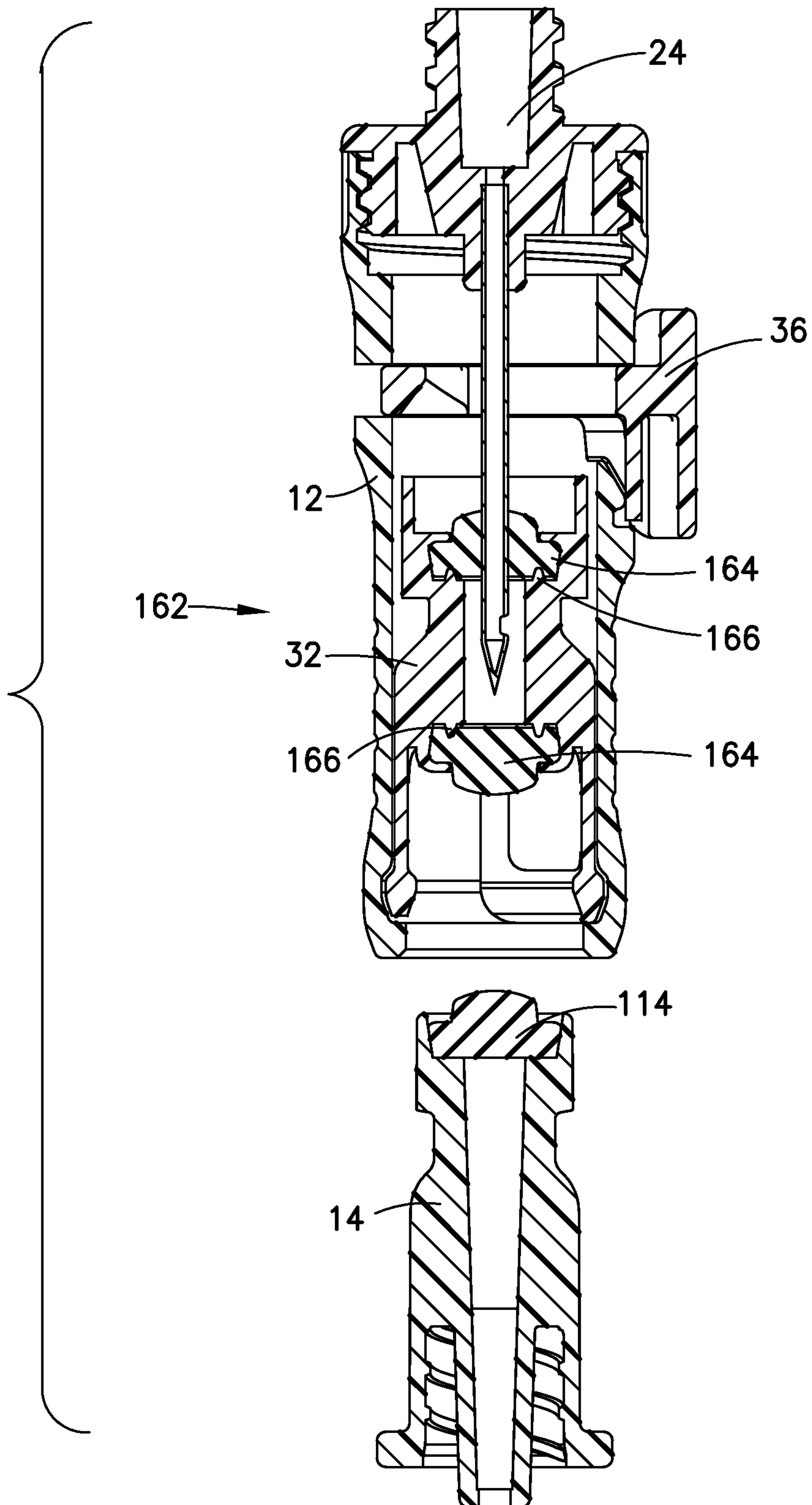


FIG.38

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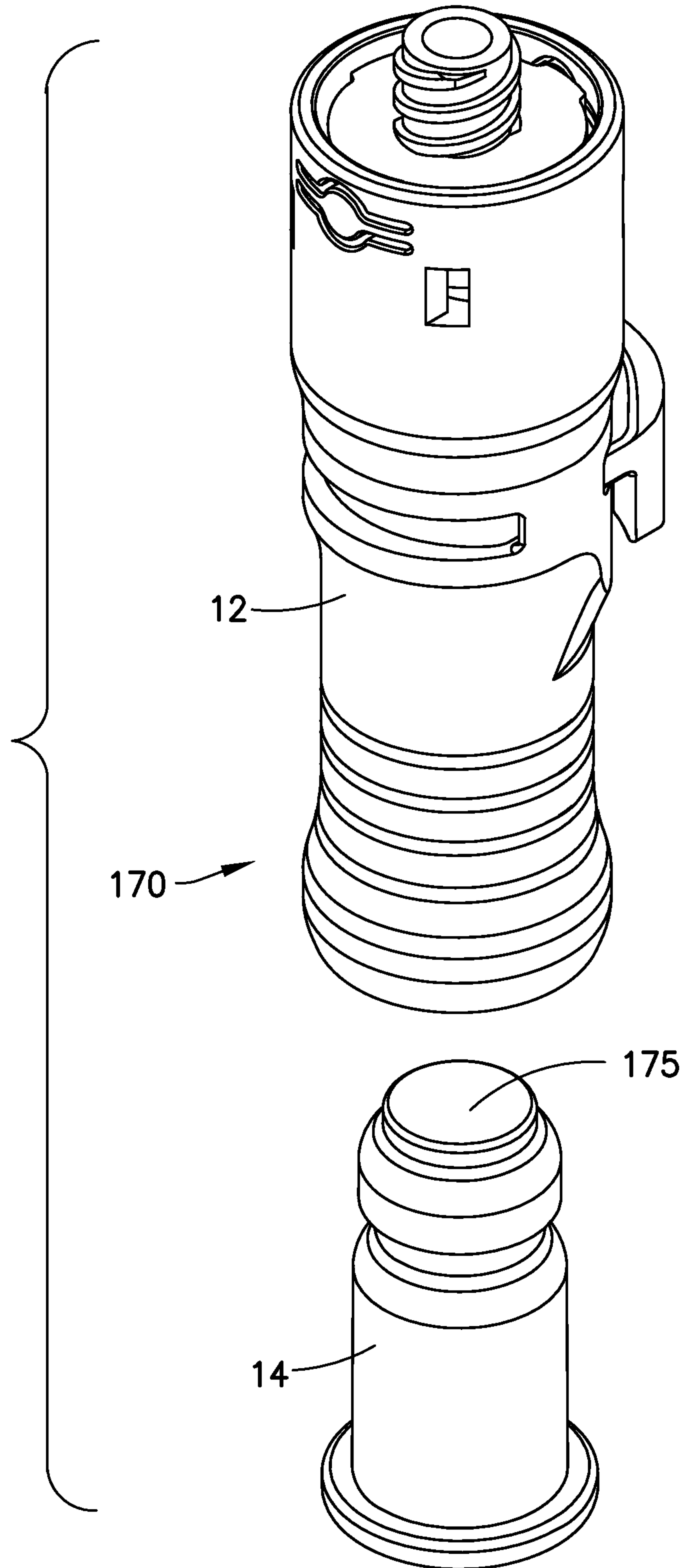


FIG.39

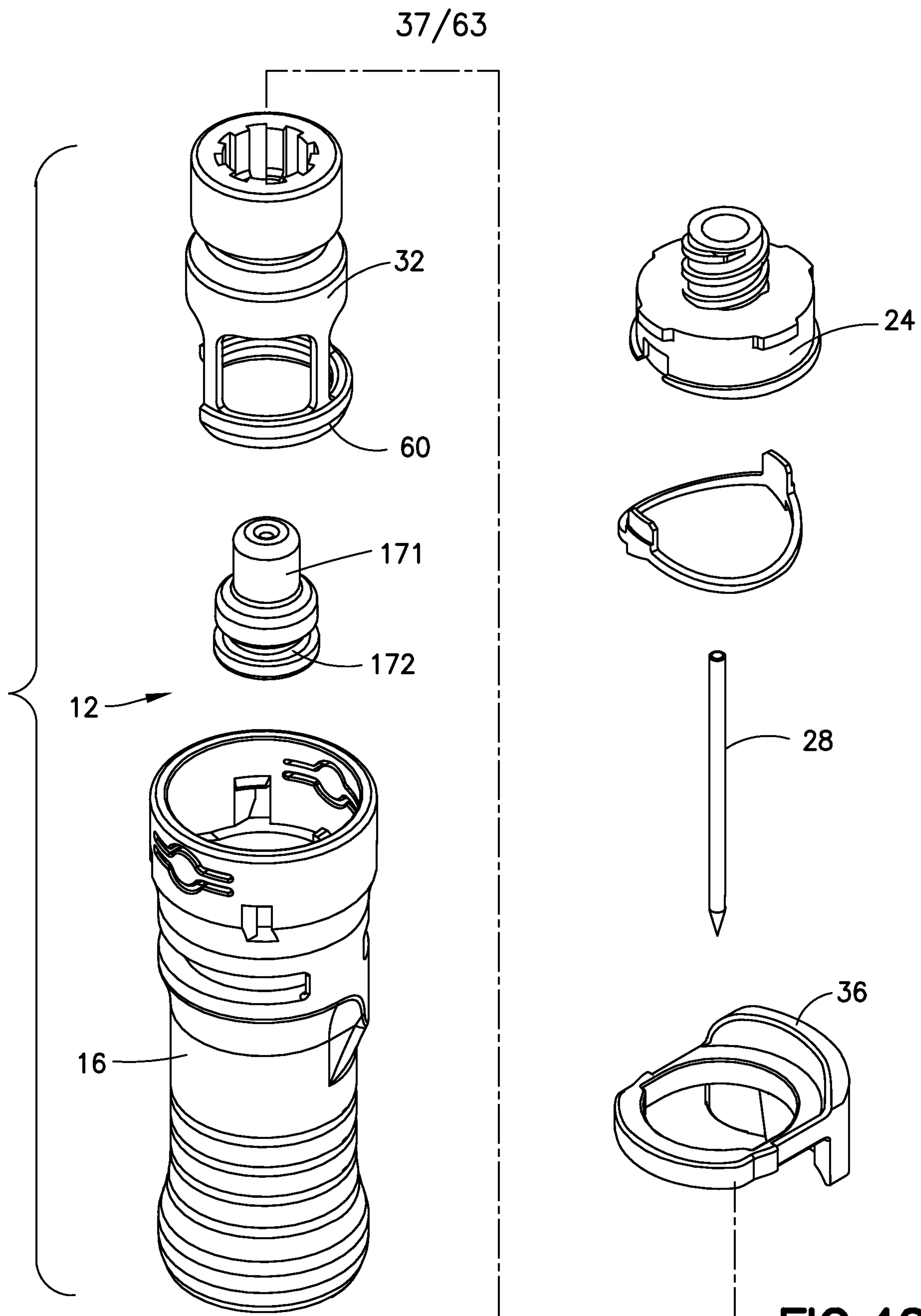


FIG.40

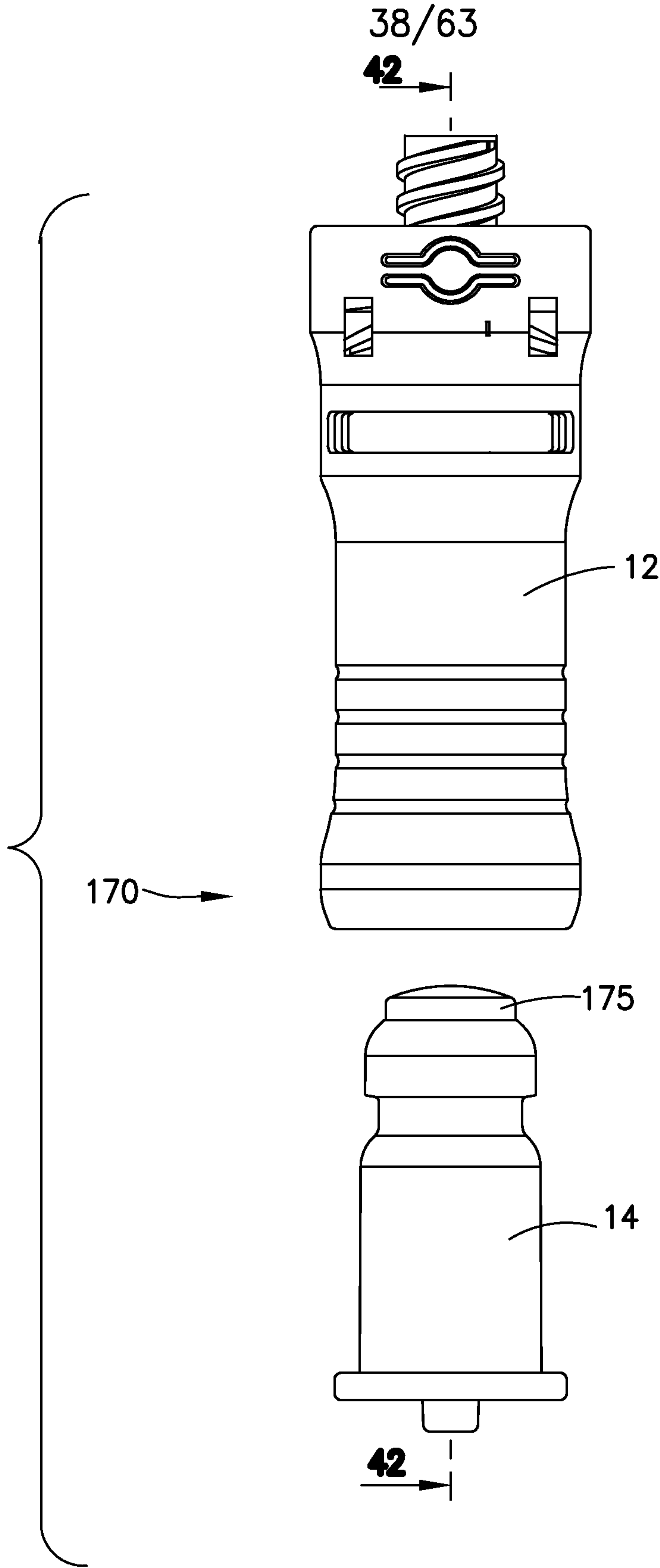


FIG.41

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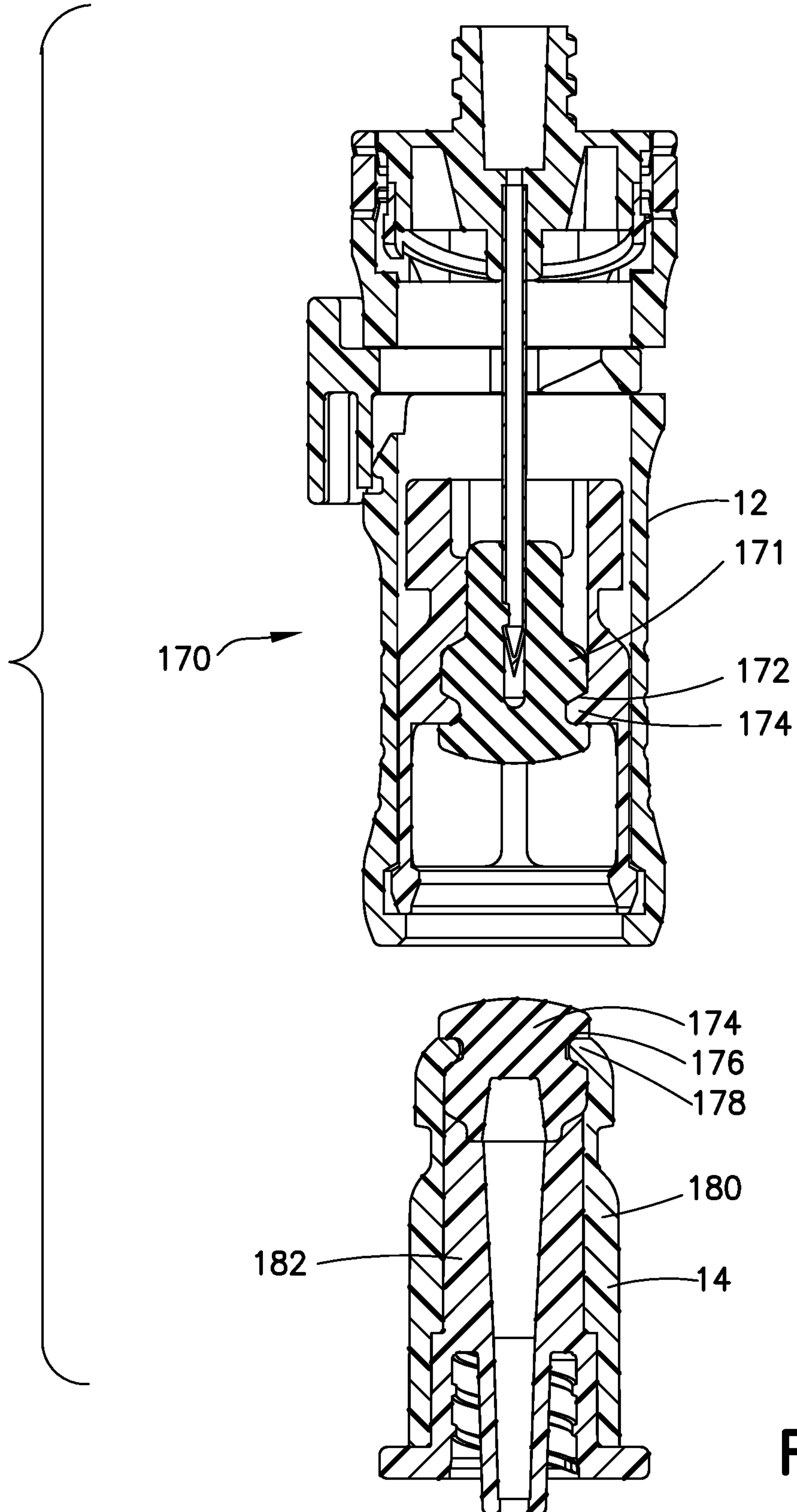


FIG. 42

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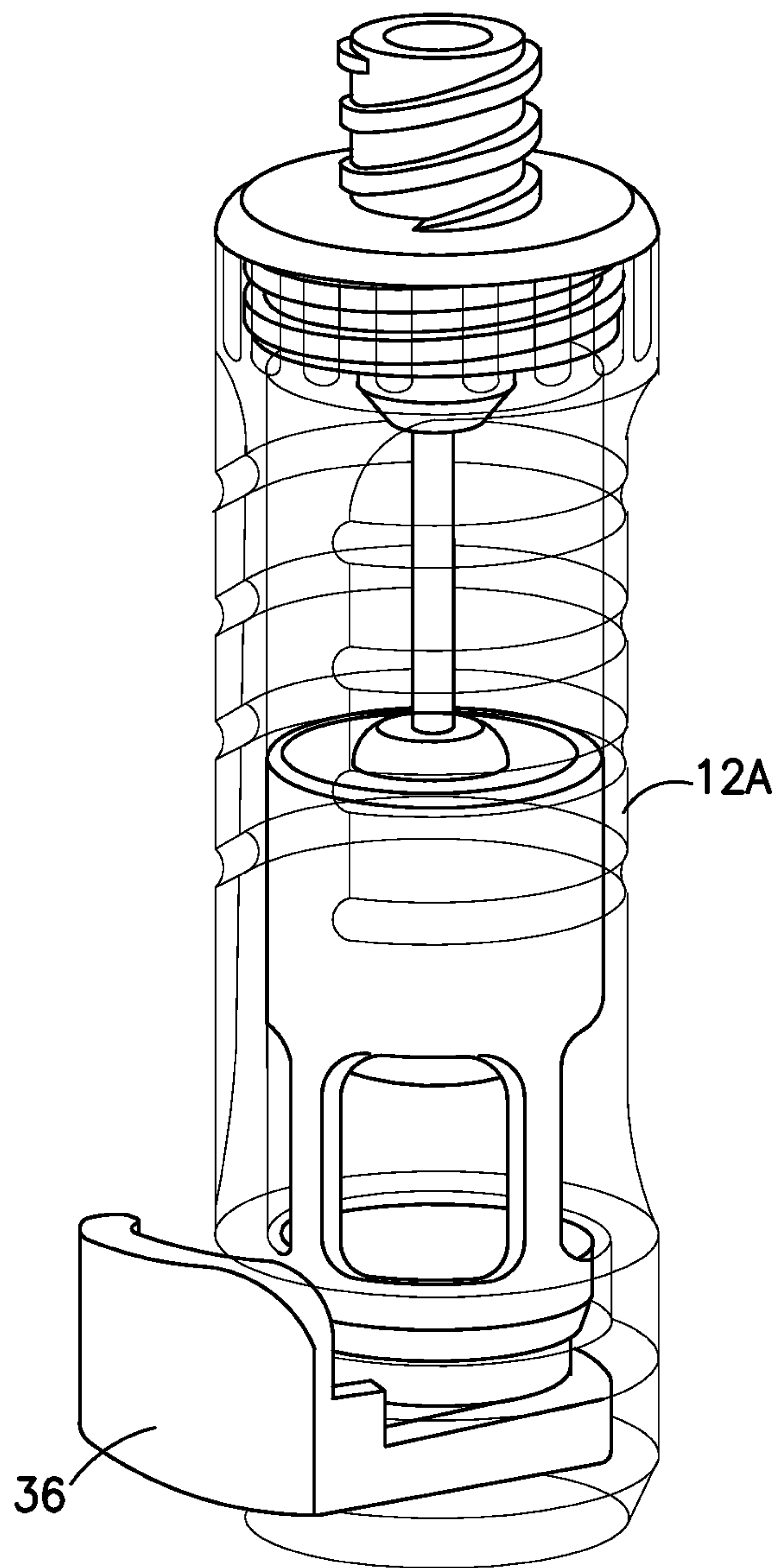


FIG. 43A

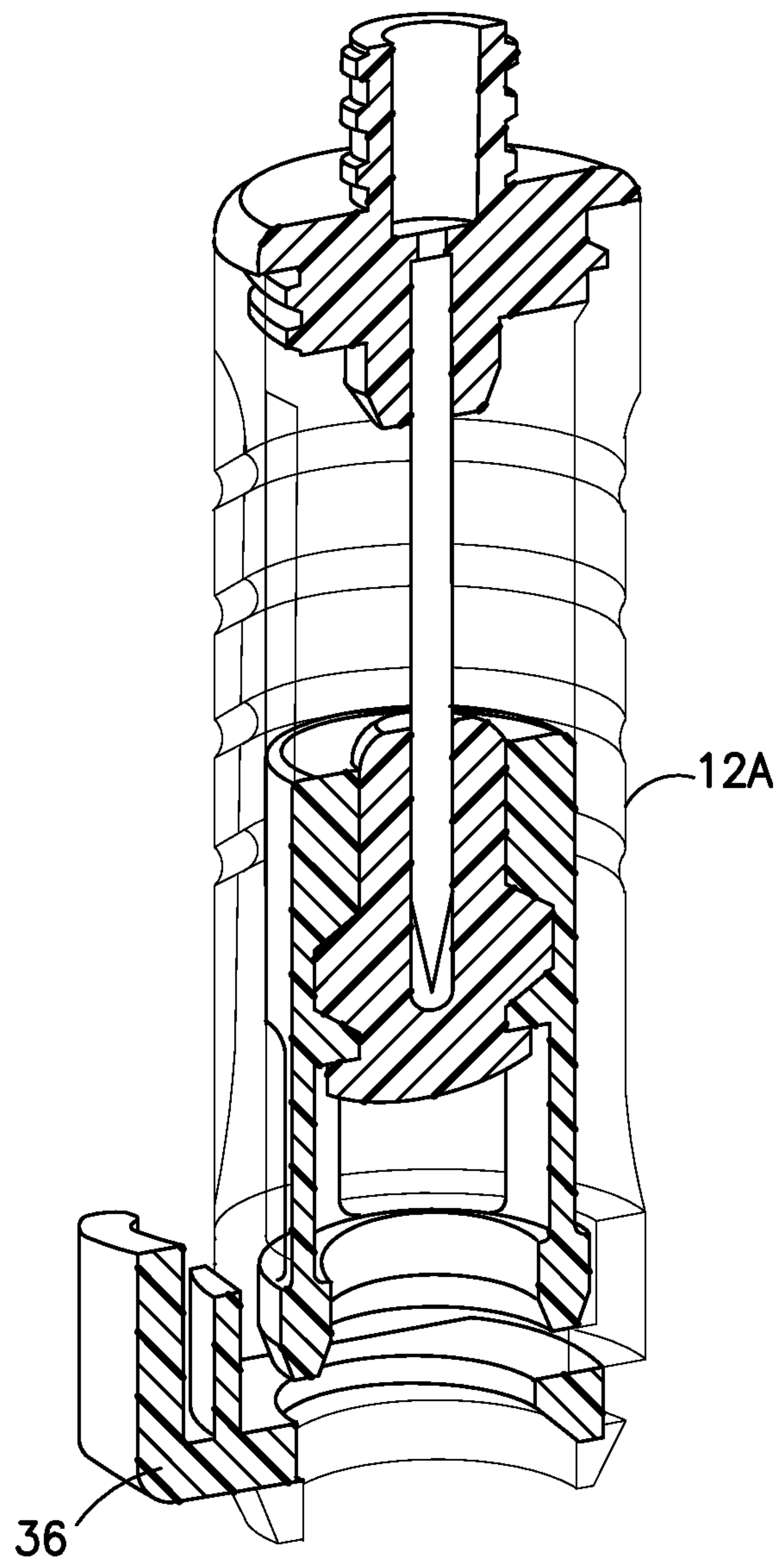


FIG. 43B

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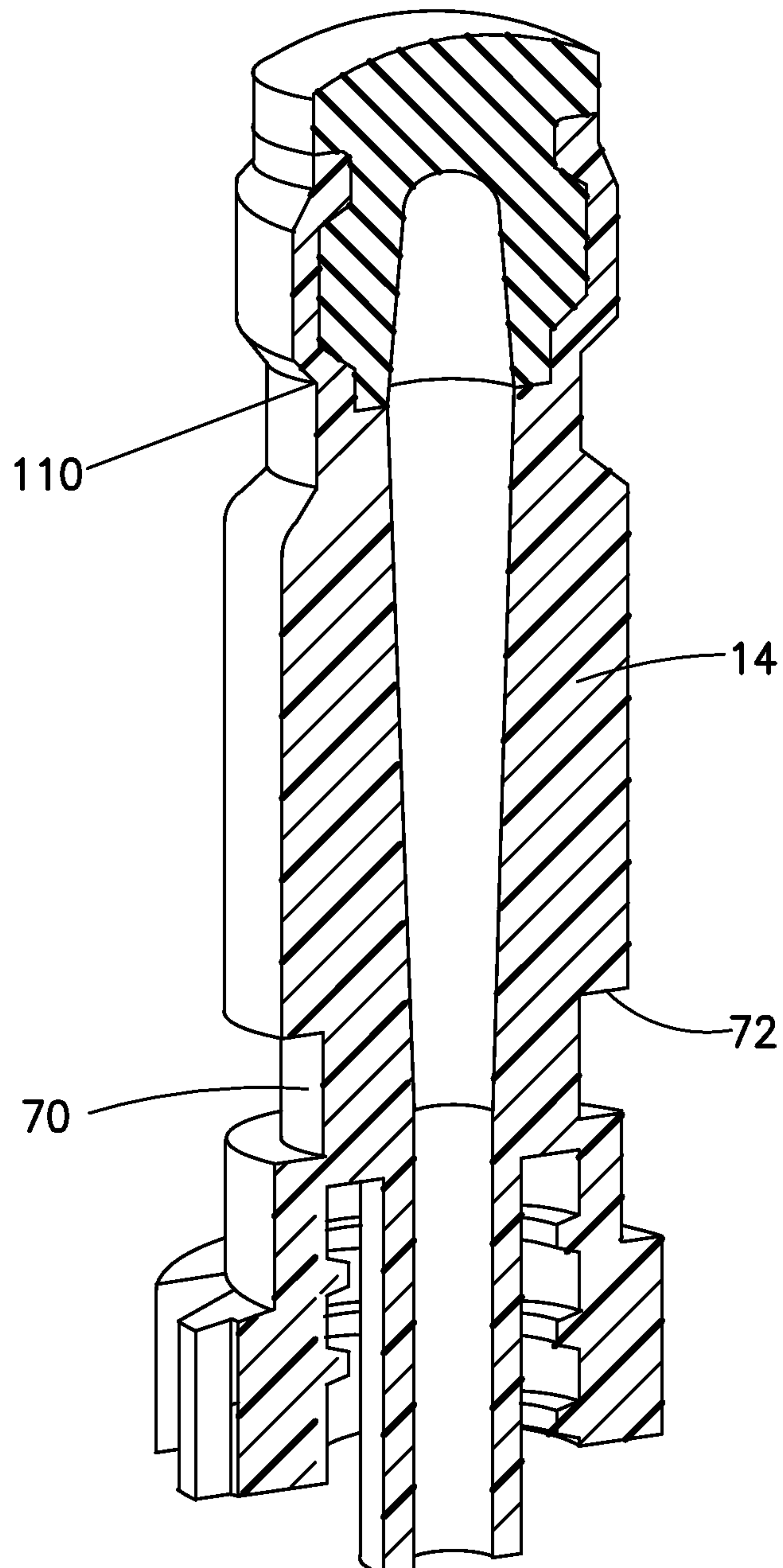
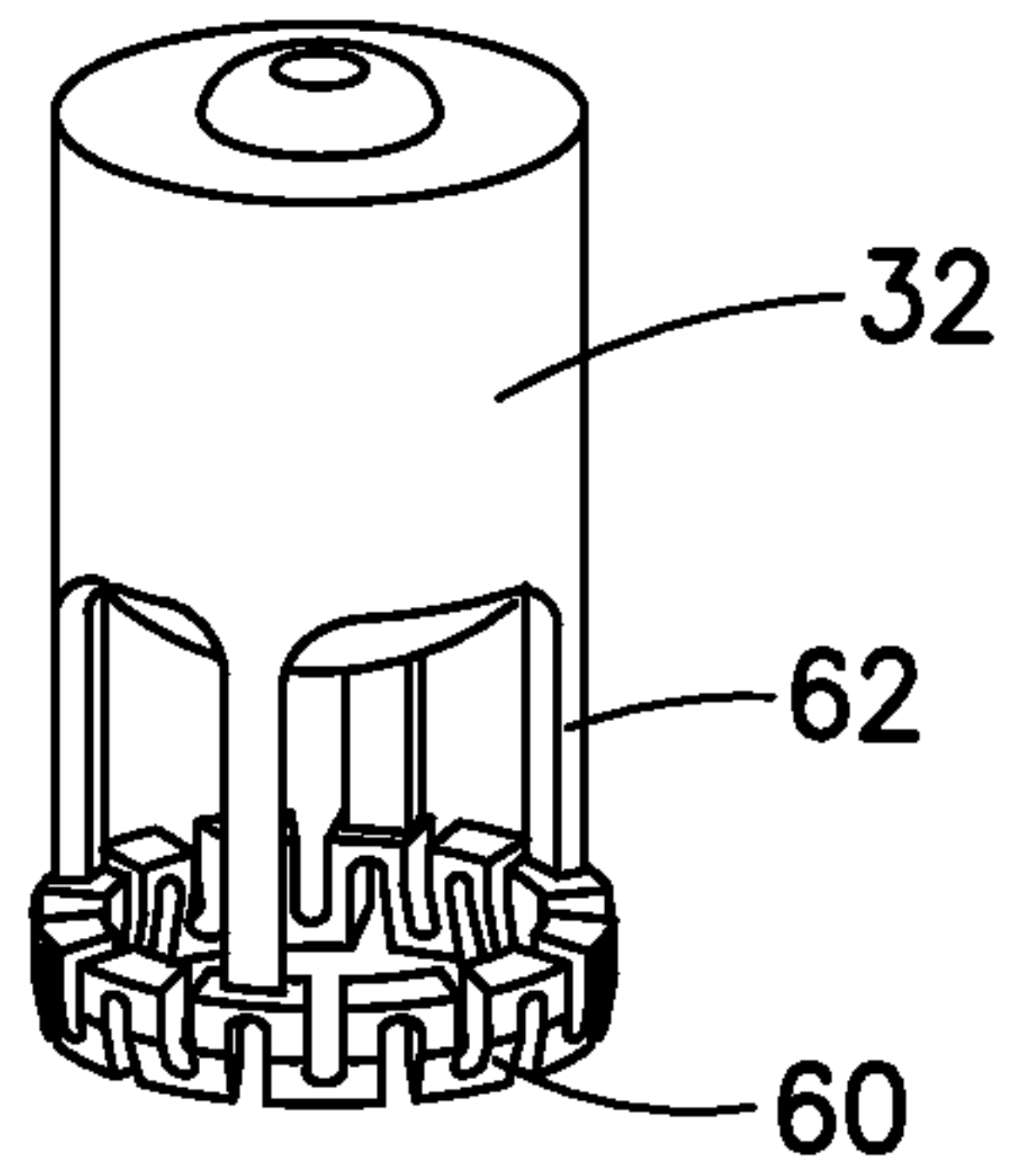
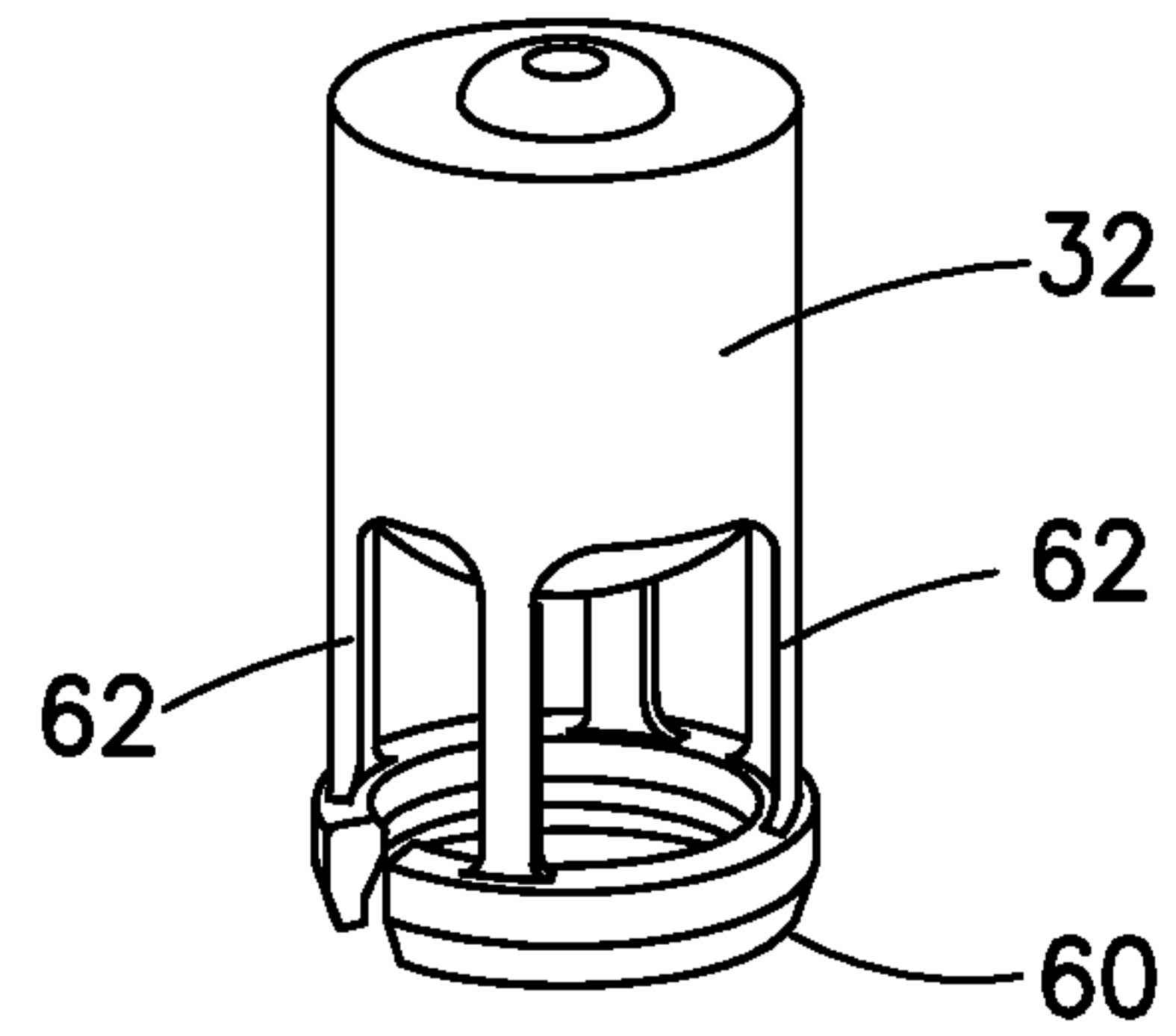
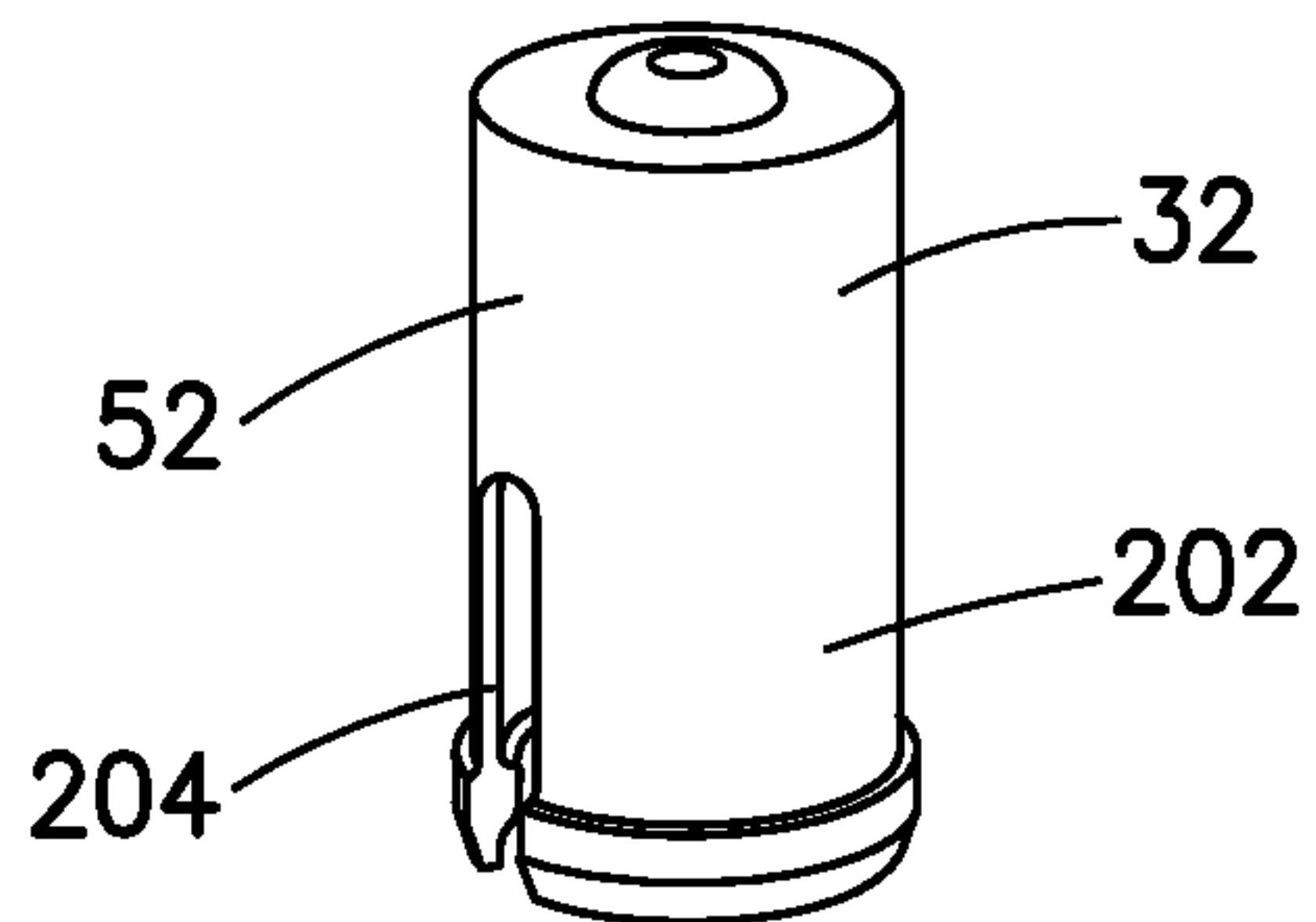
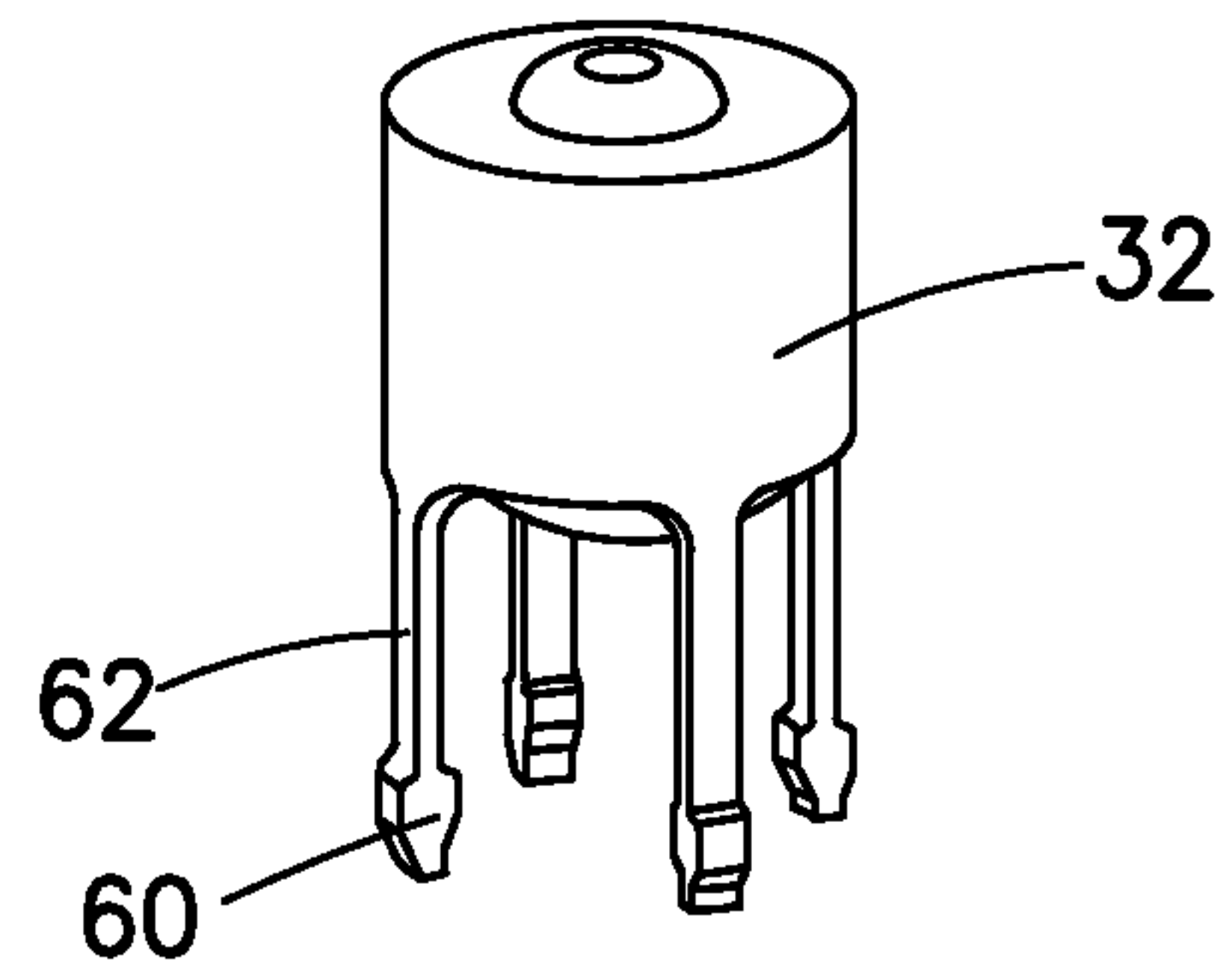
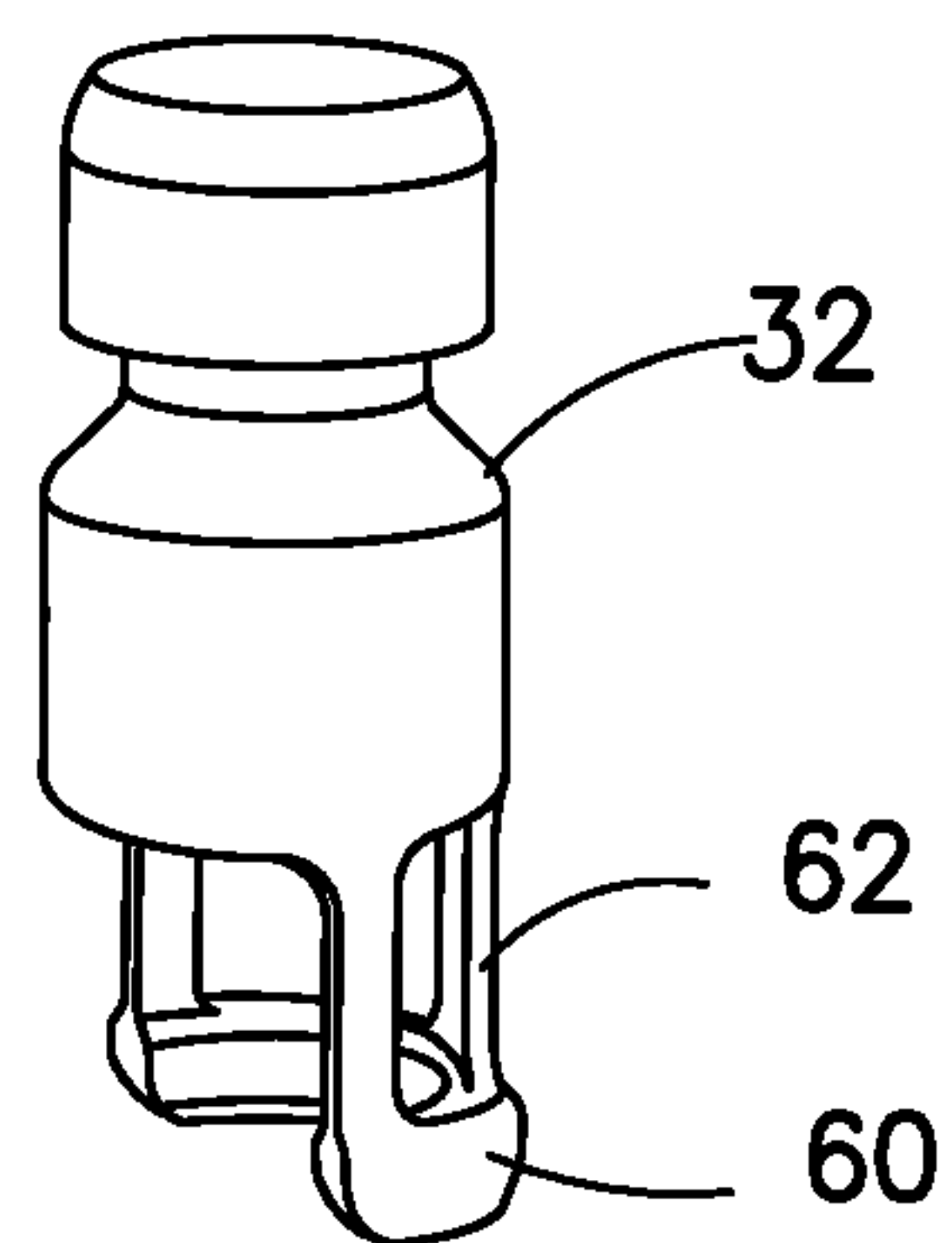
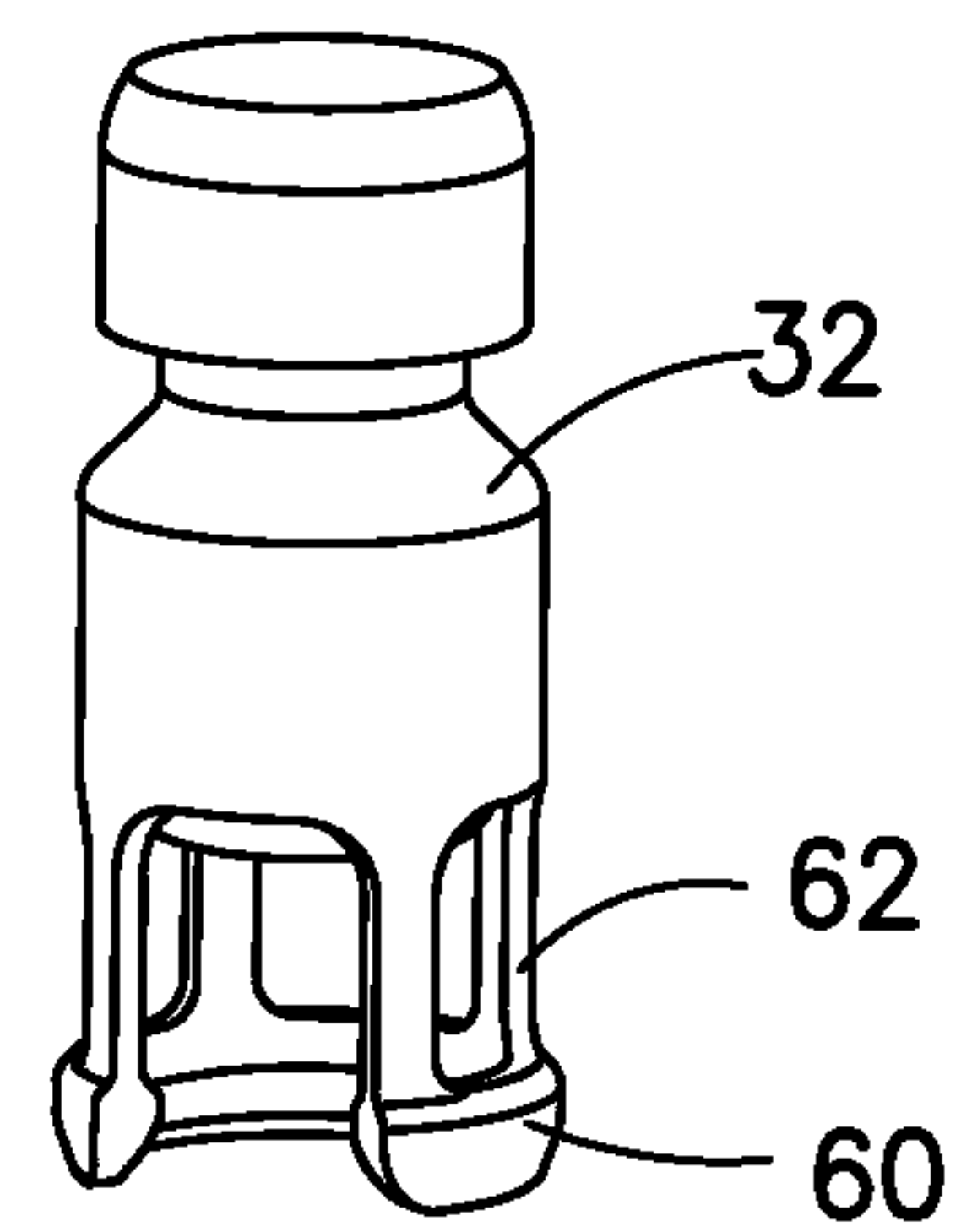


FIG. 44

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**FIG. 45A****FIG. 45B****FIG. 45C****FIG. 45D****FIG. 45E****FIG. 45F**

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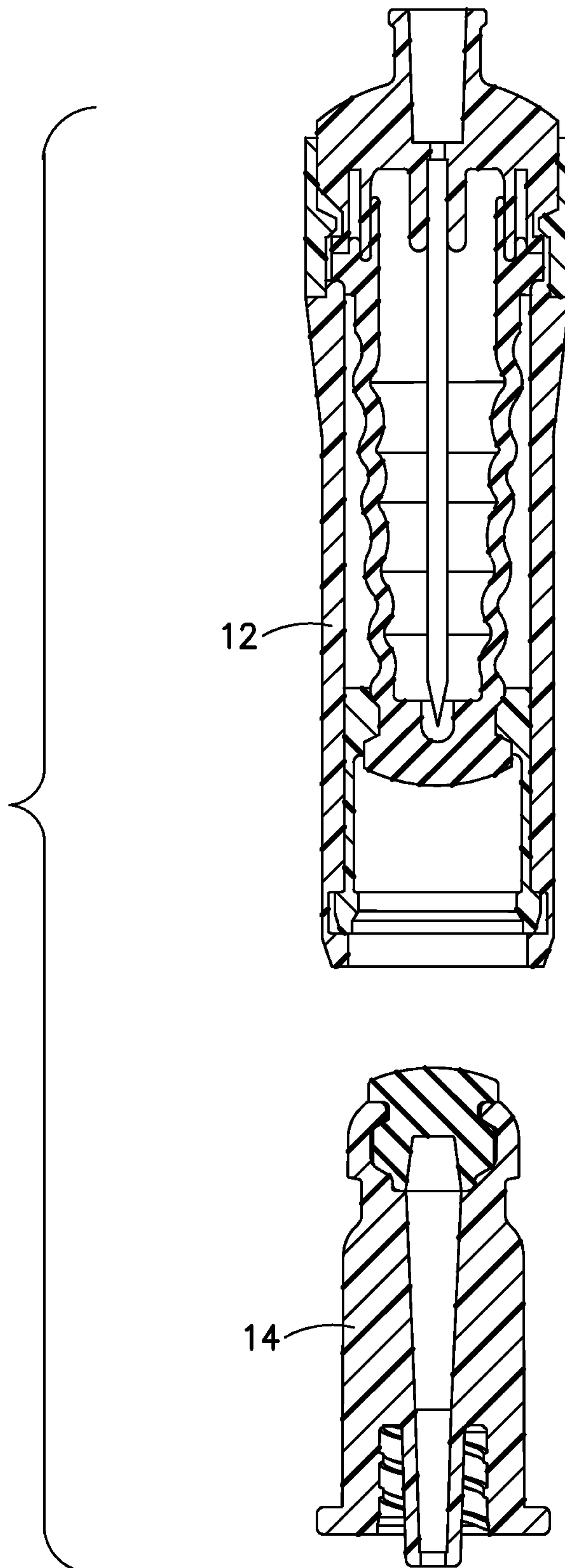


FIG.46

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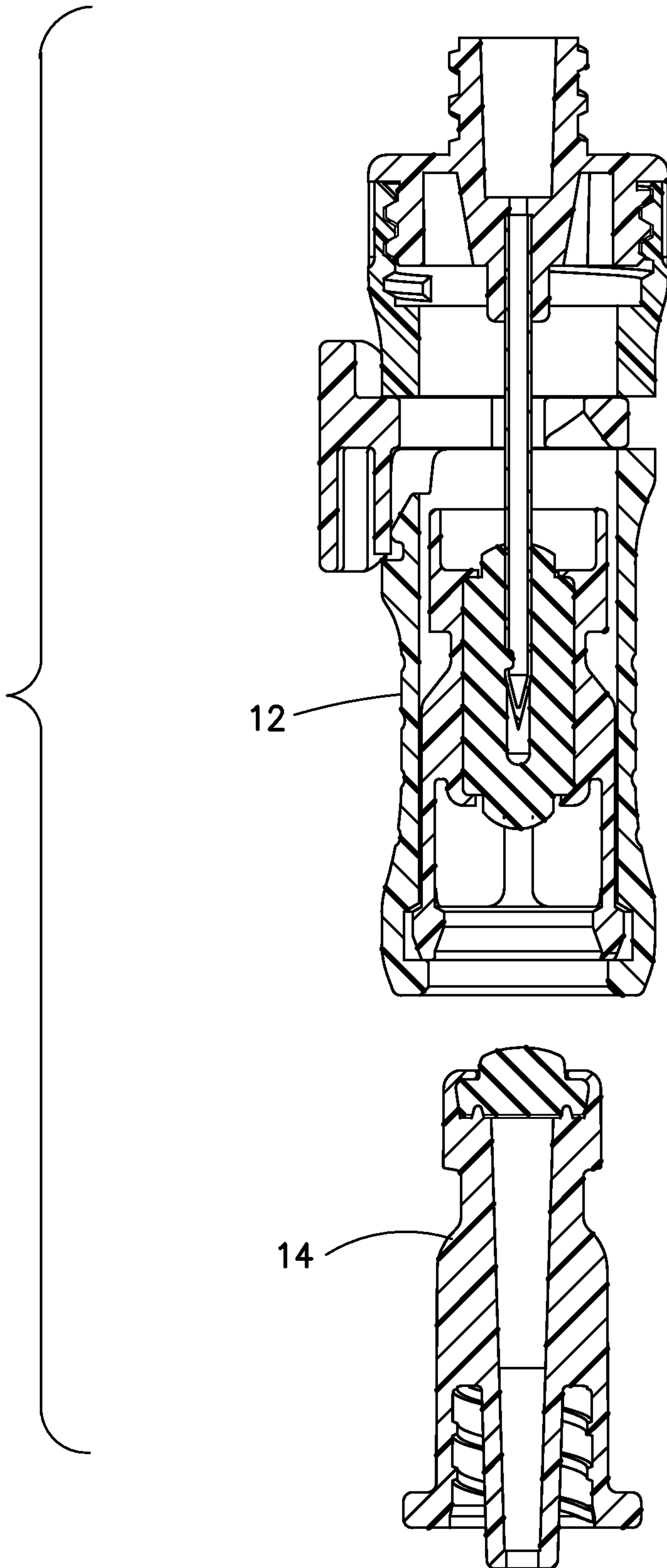
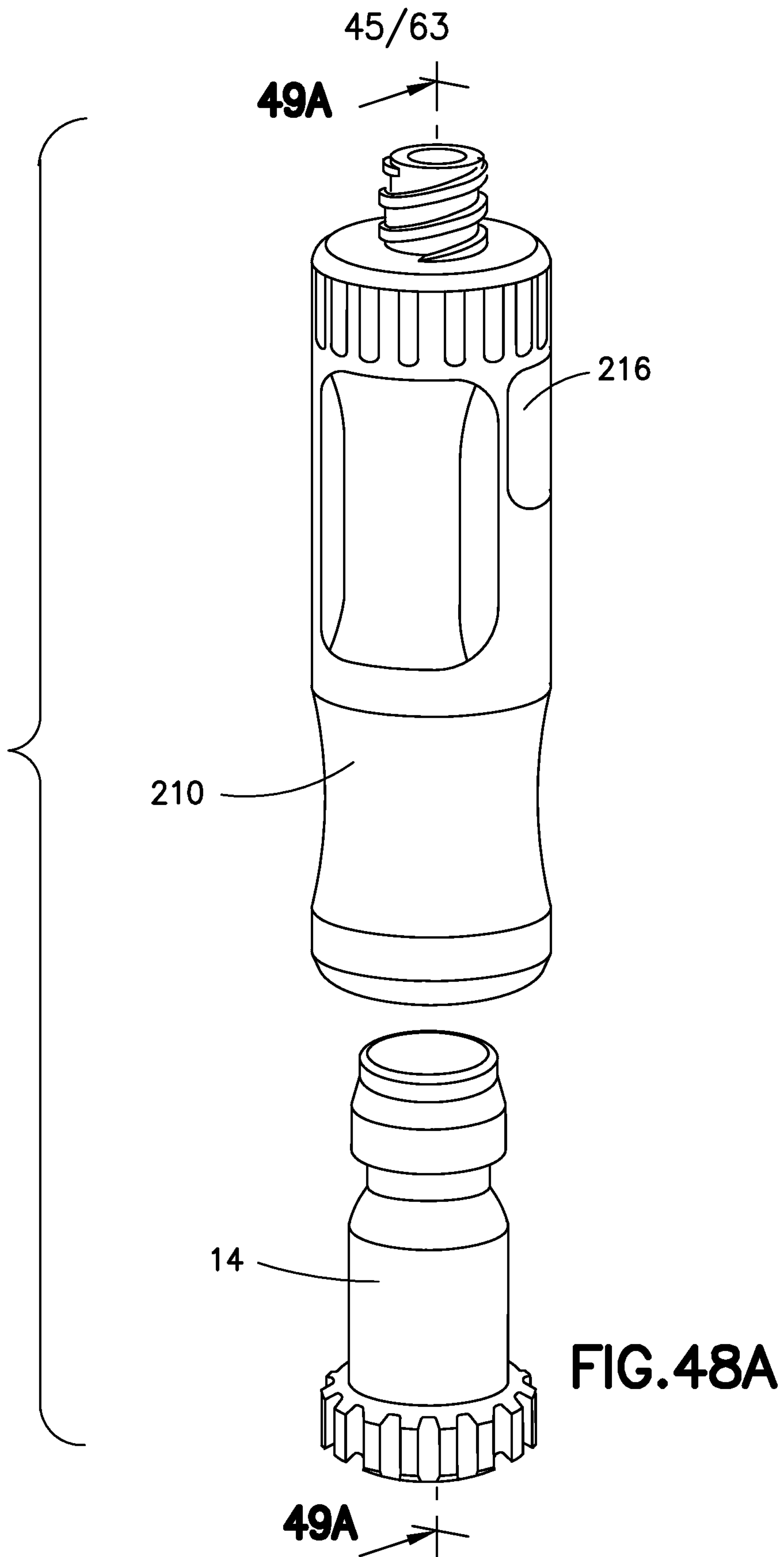
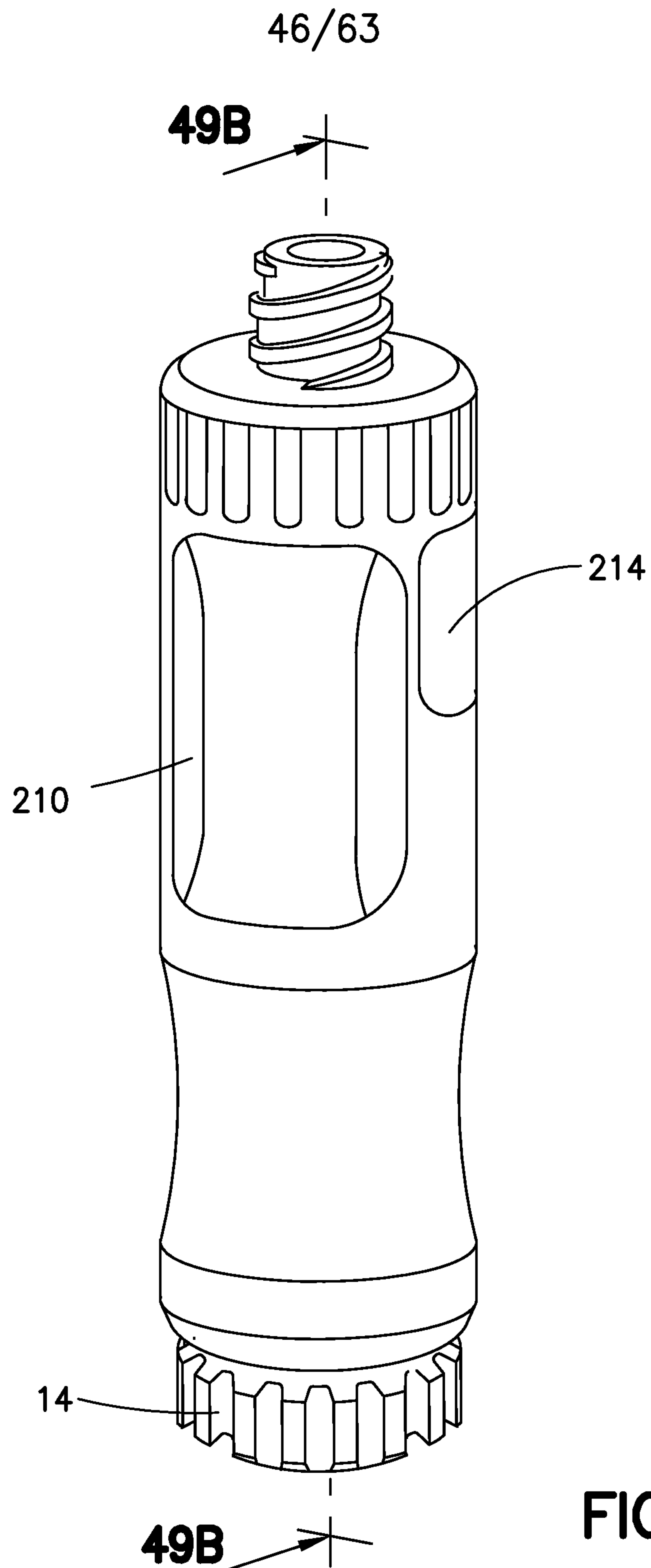


FIG.47



**FIG. 48B**

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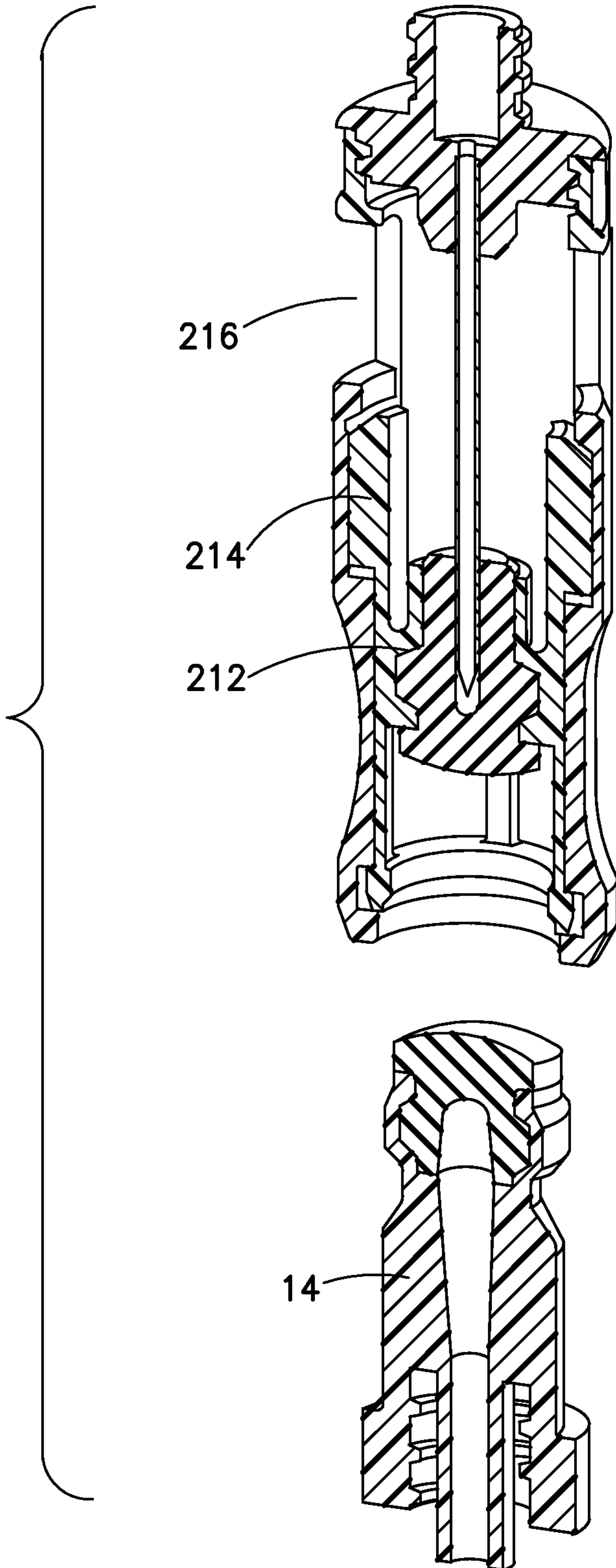
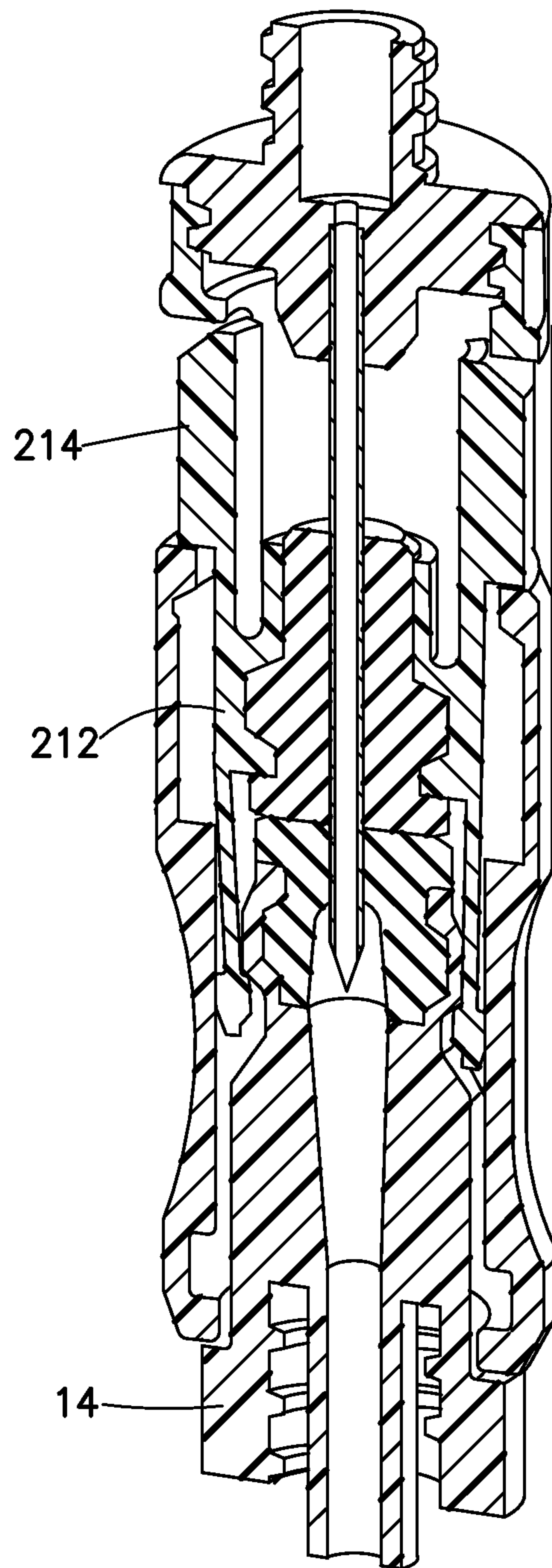
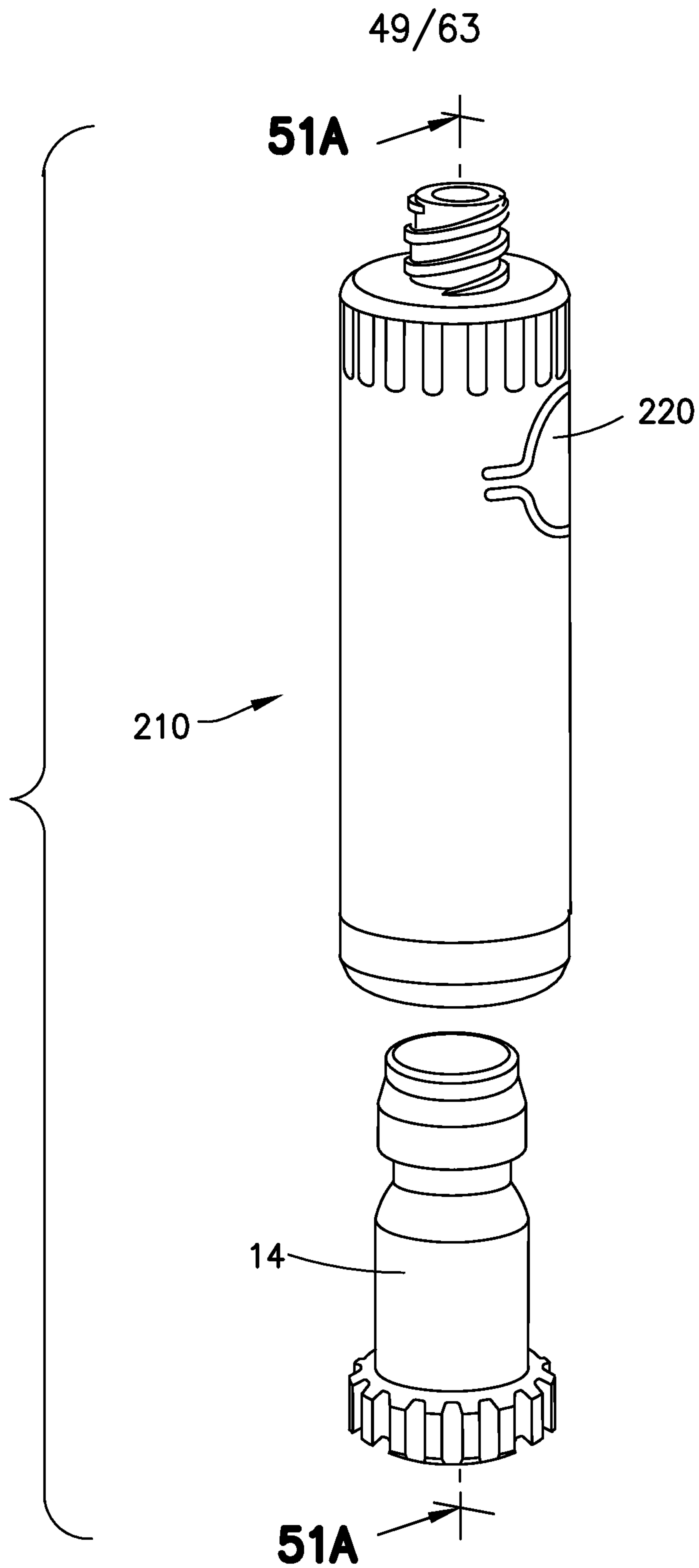


FIG. 49A

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**FIG.49B**

**FIG. 50A**

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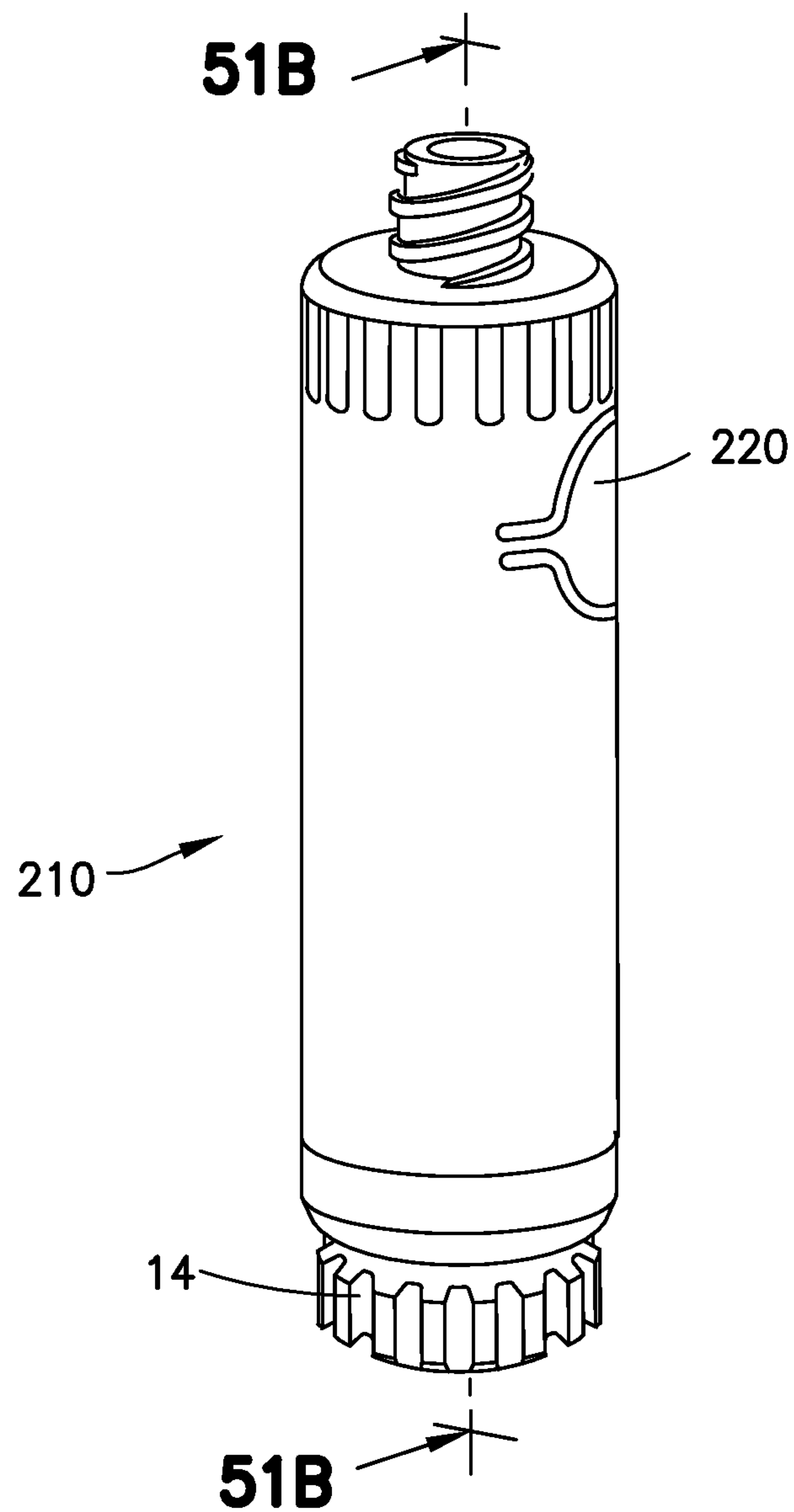


FIG. 50B

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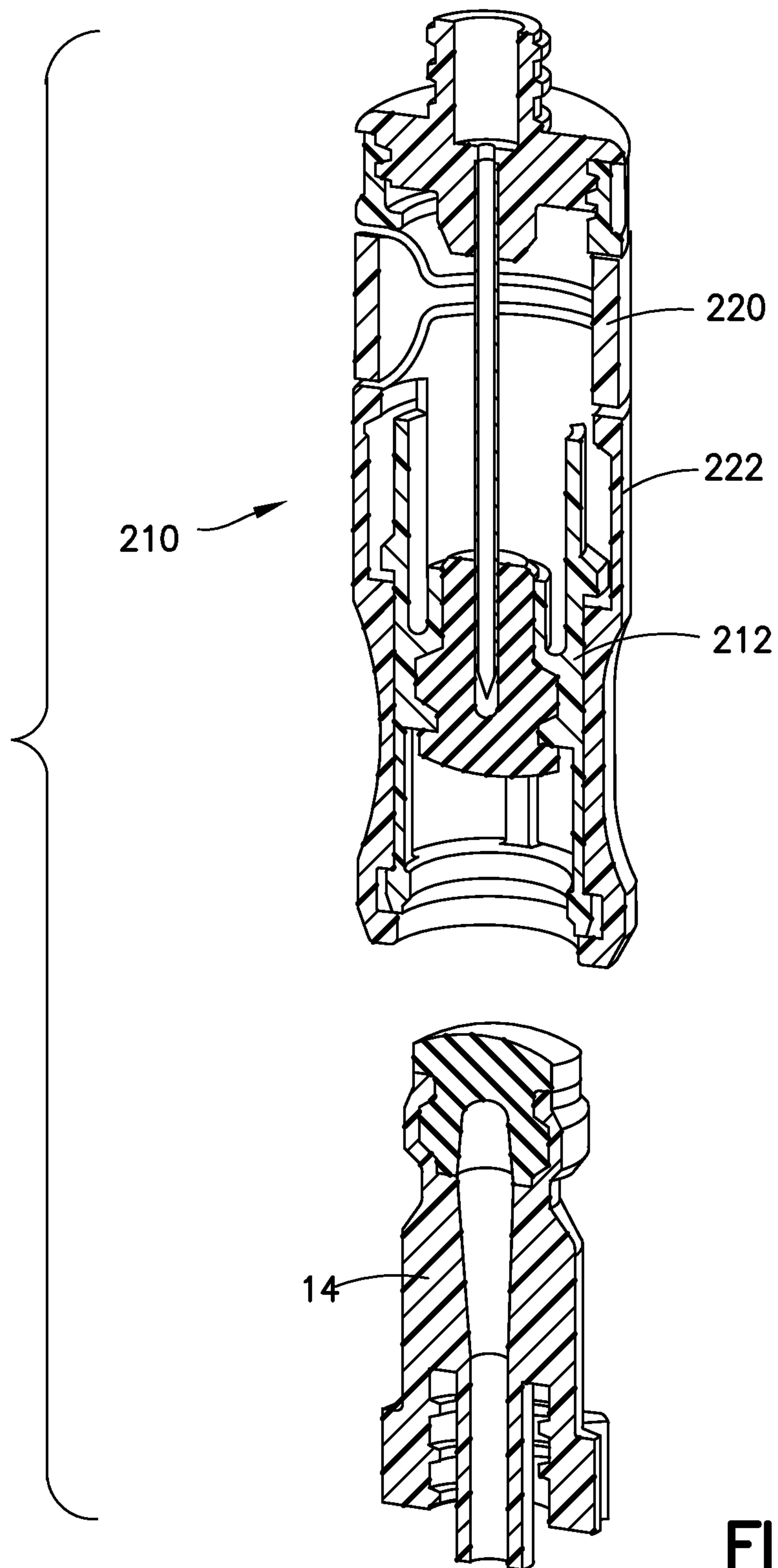


FIG. 51A

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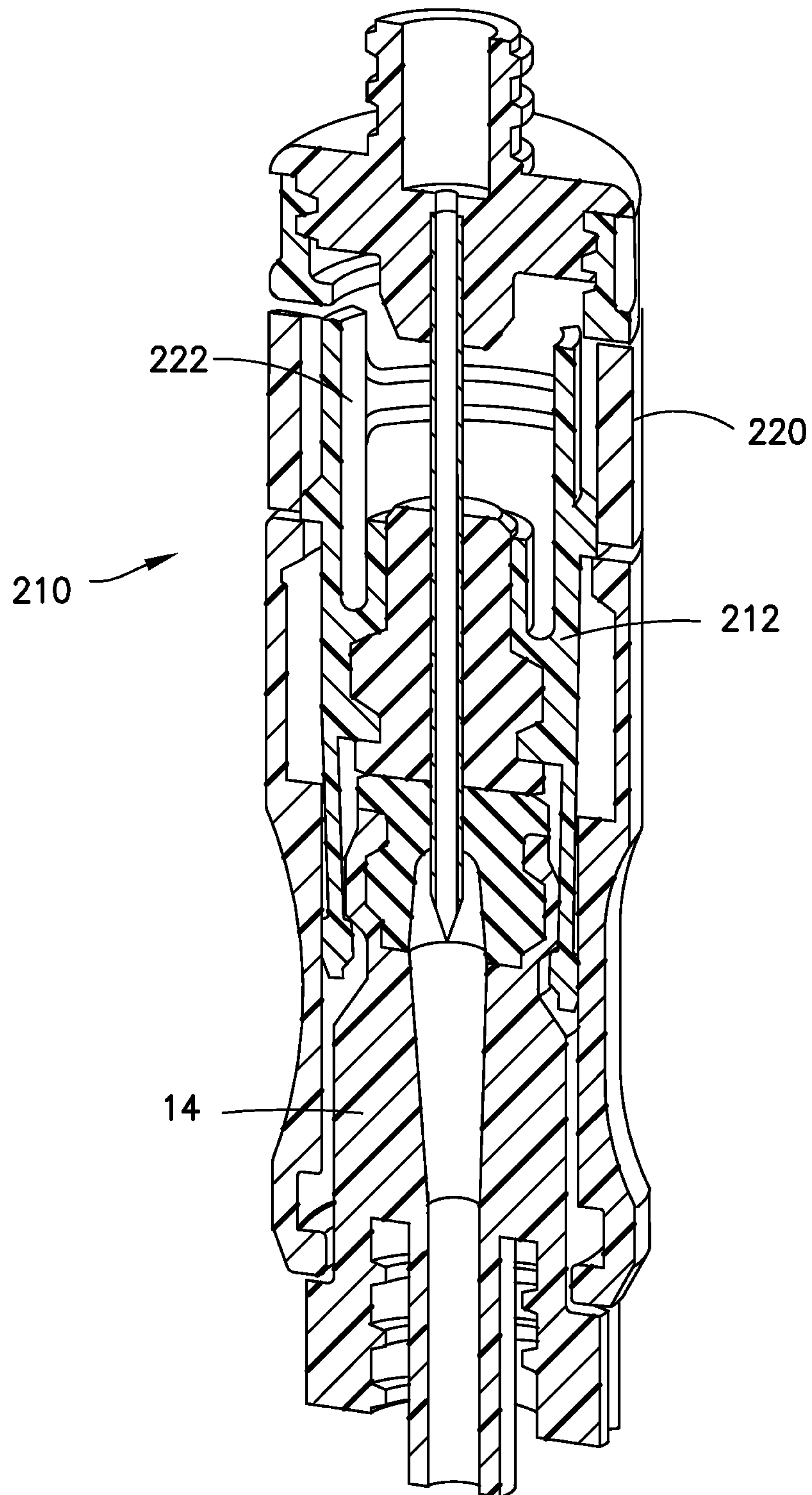


FIG. 51B

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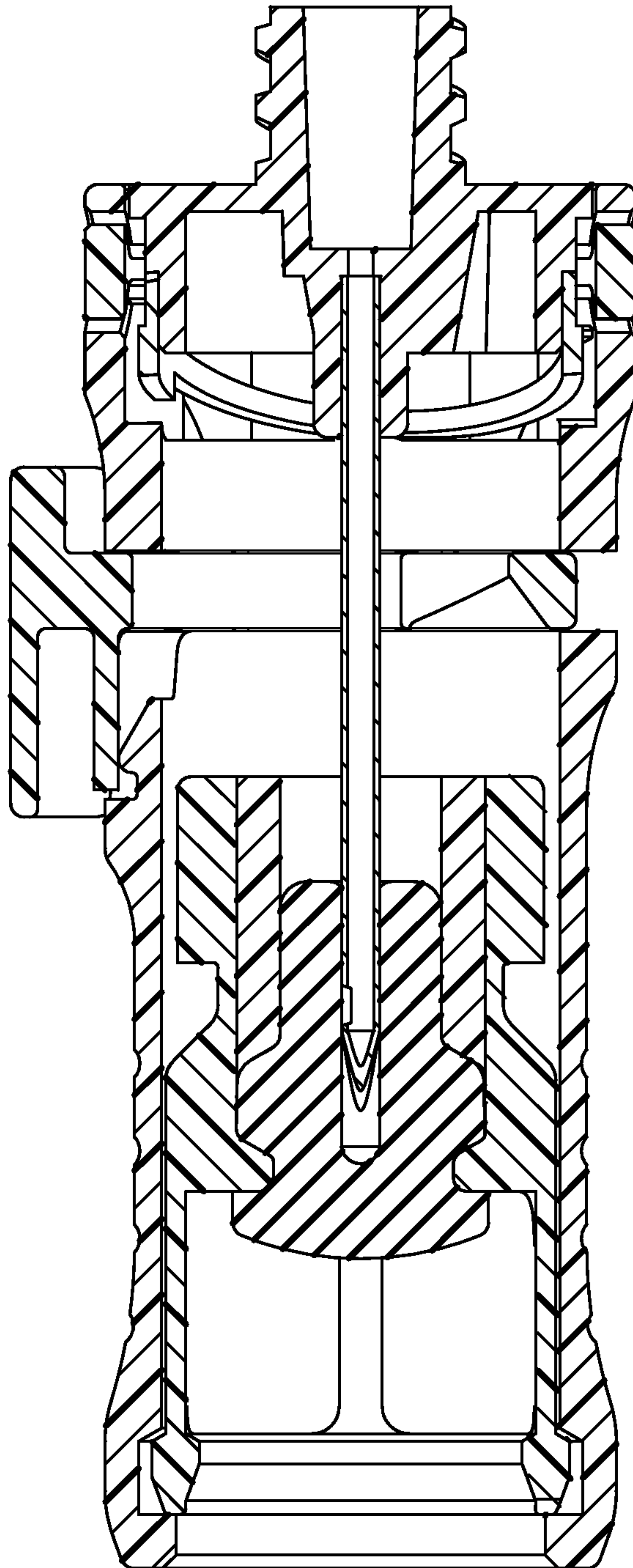


FIG.52

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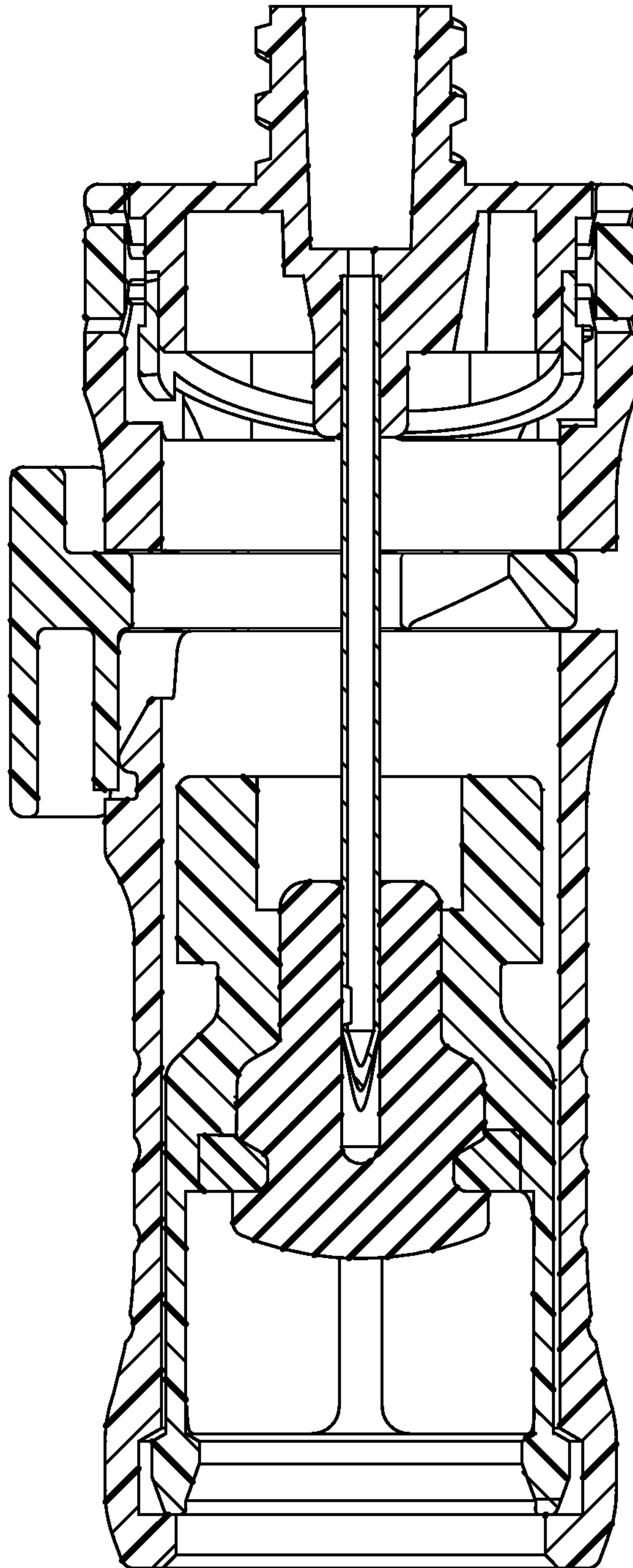


FIG.53

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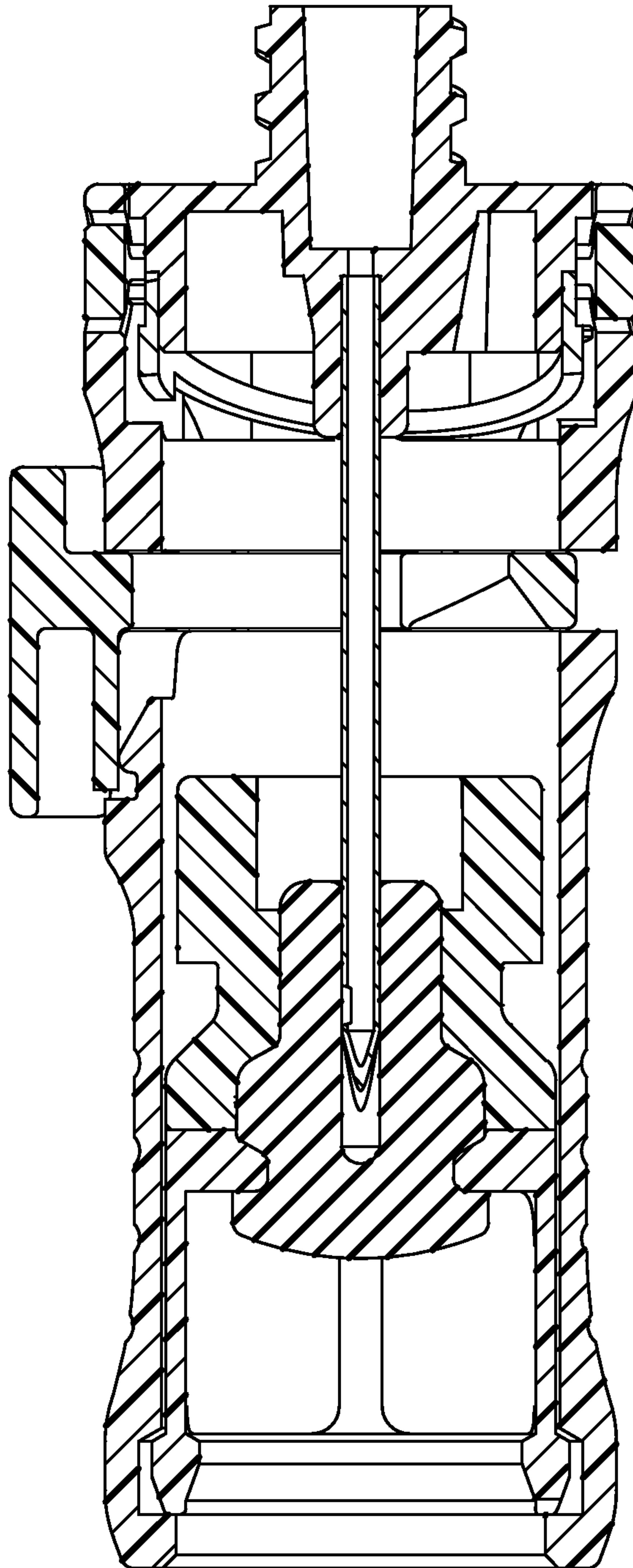
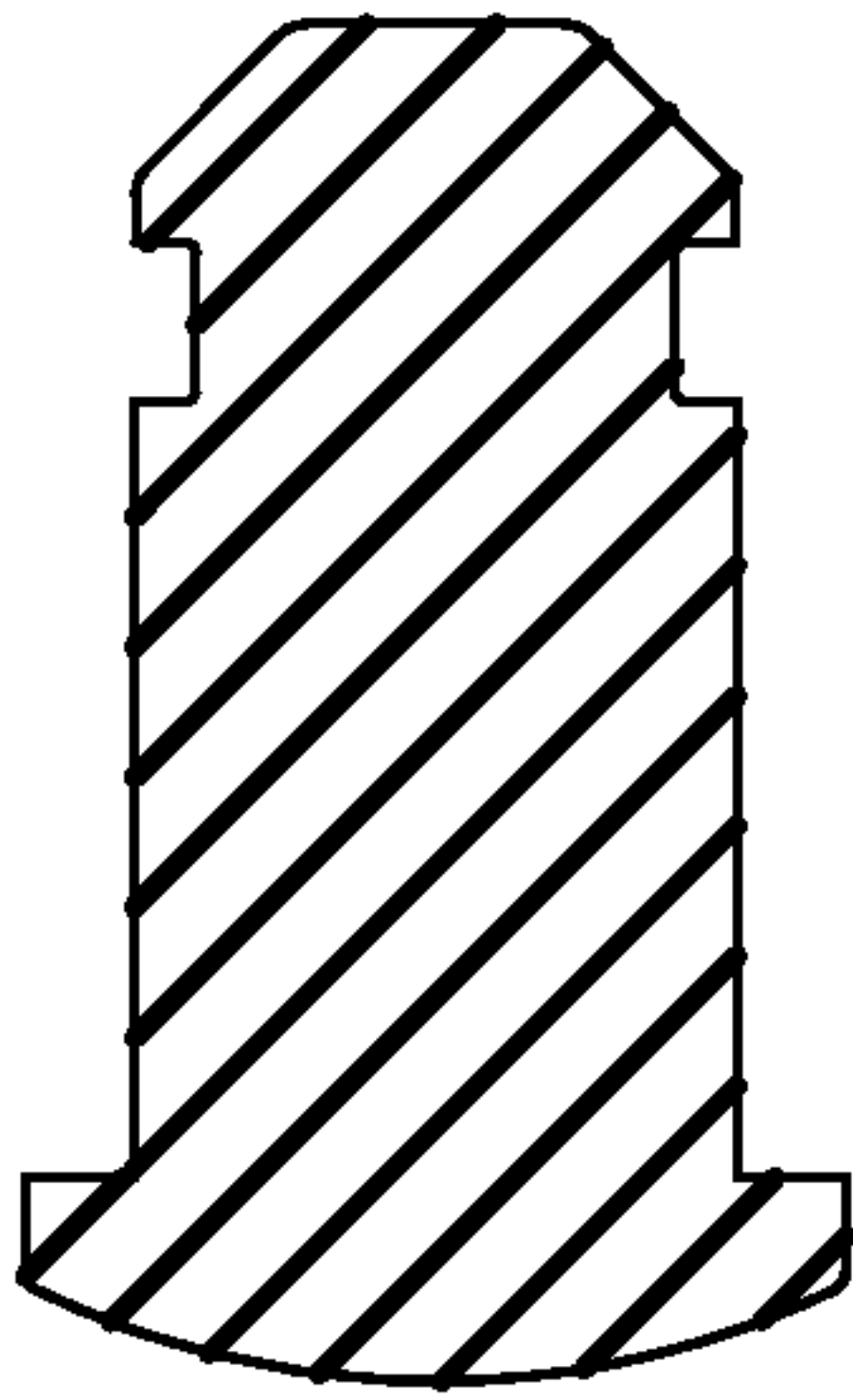
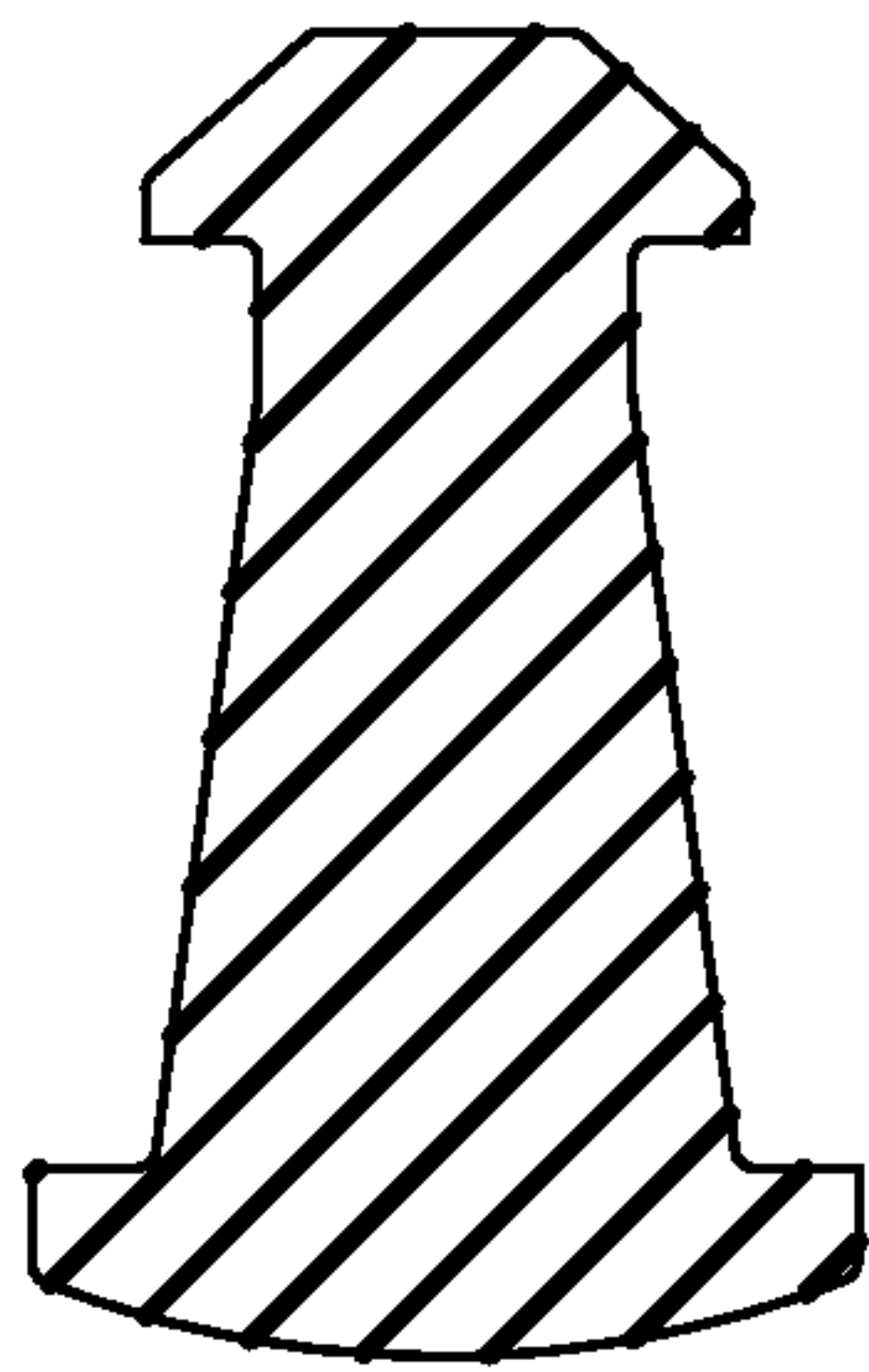
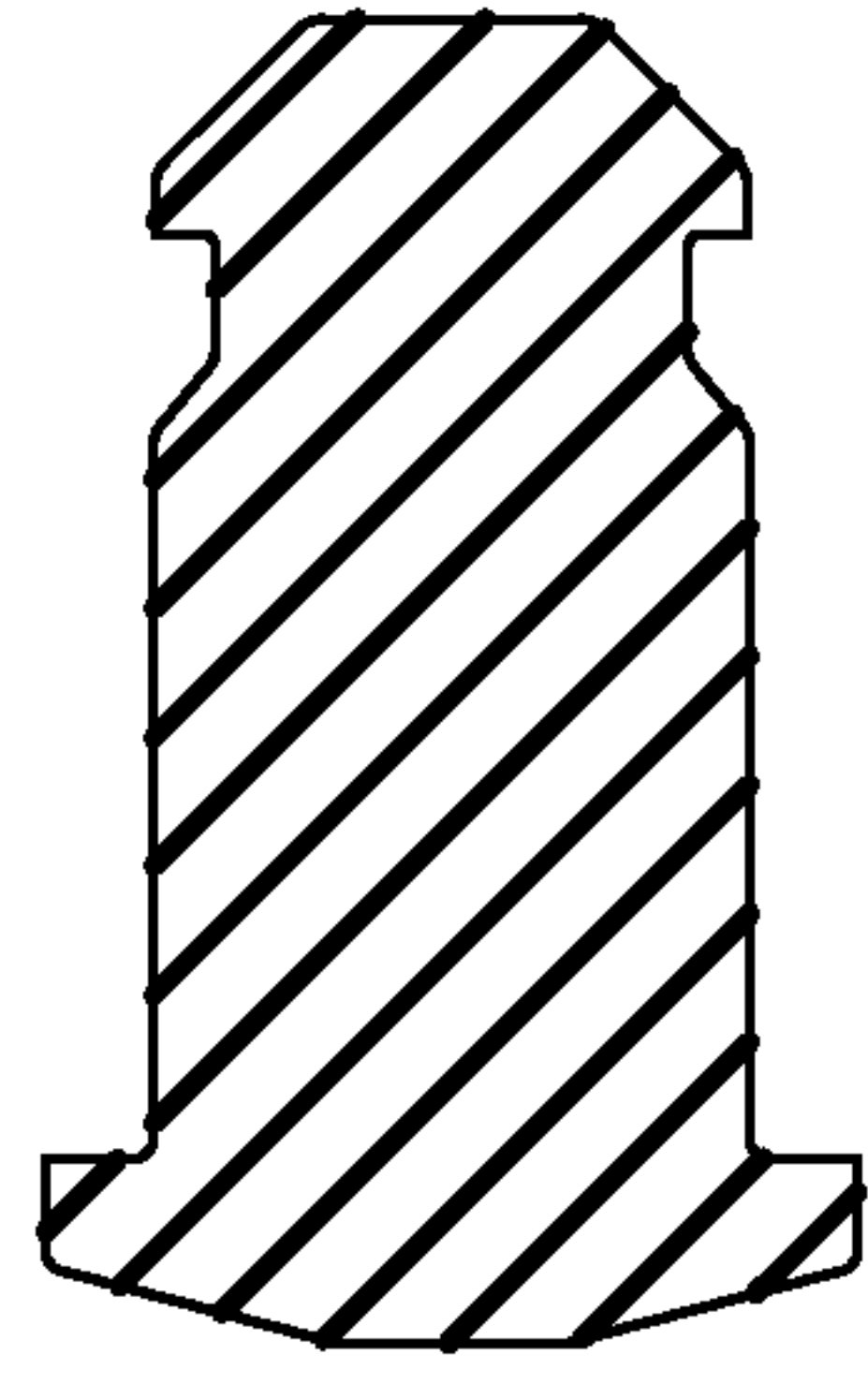
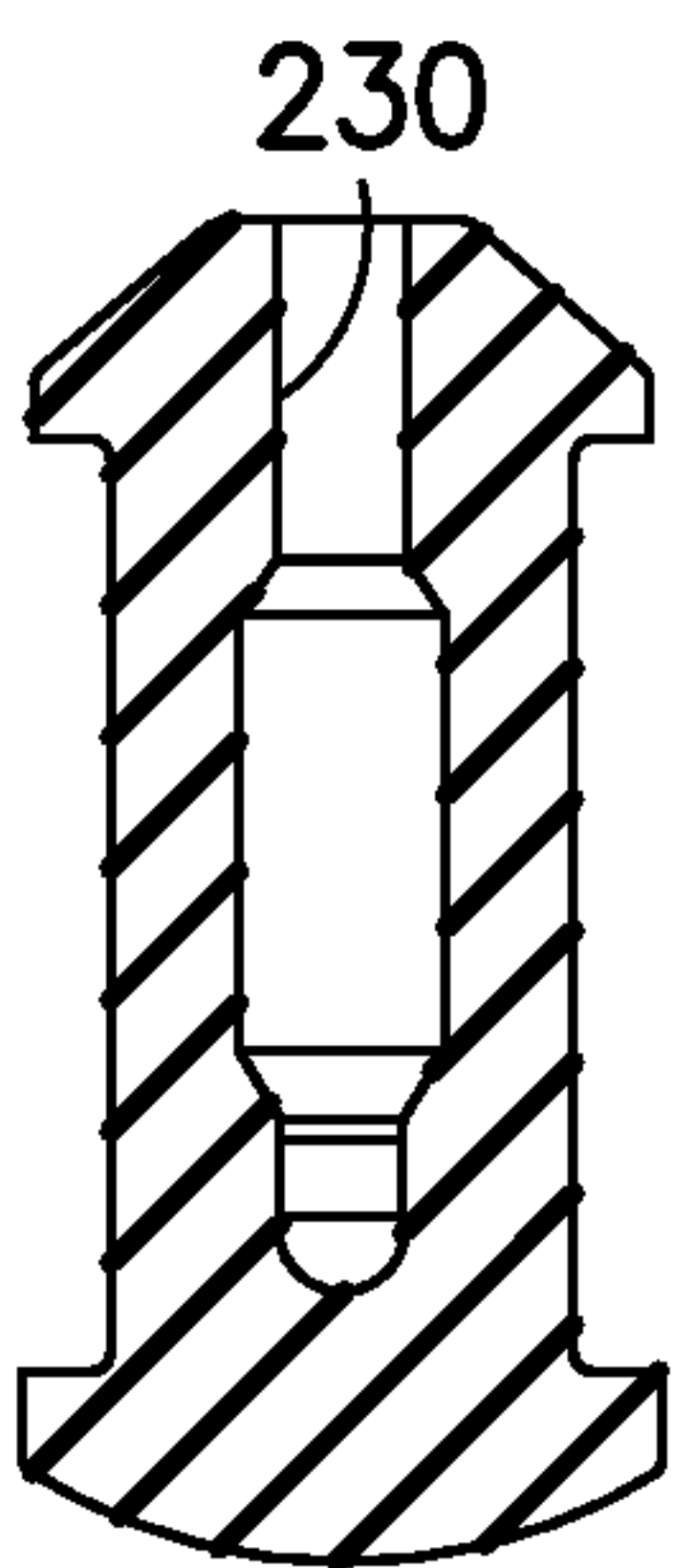
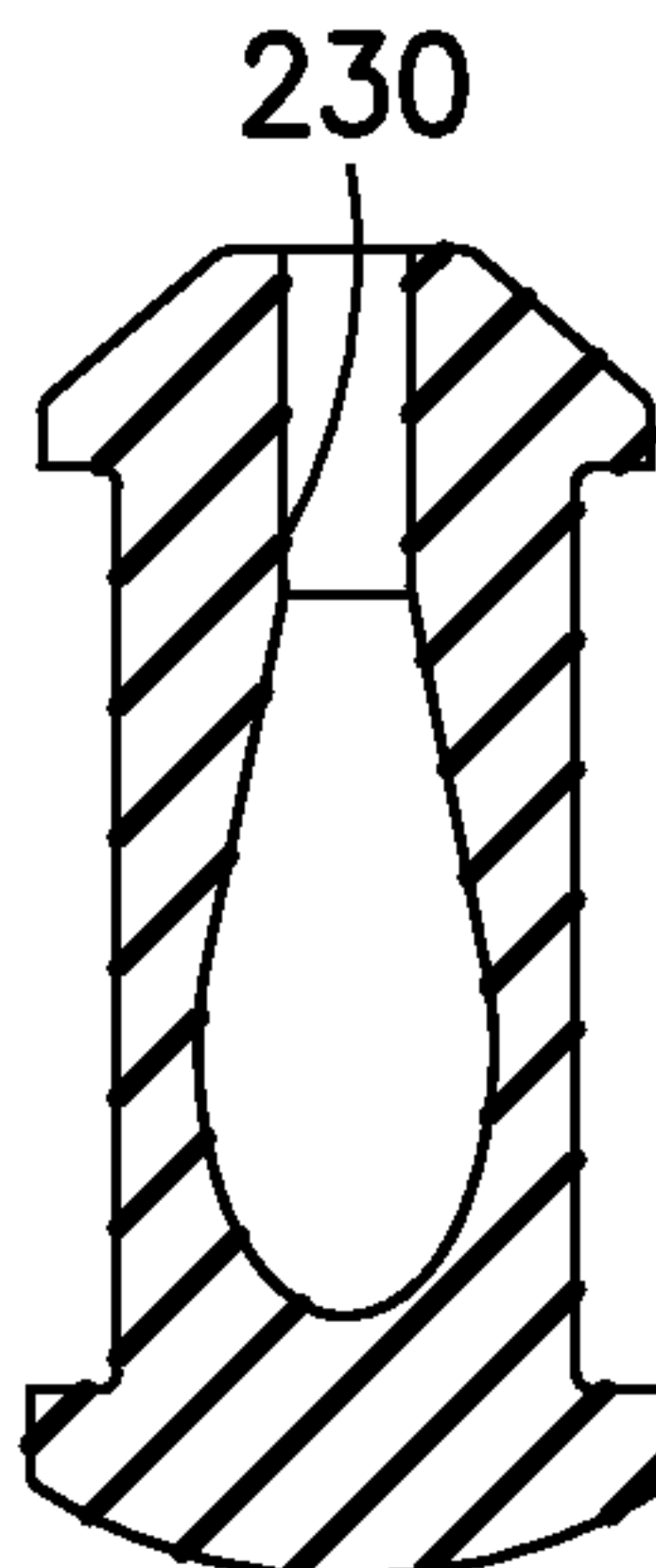
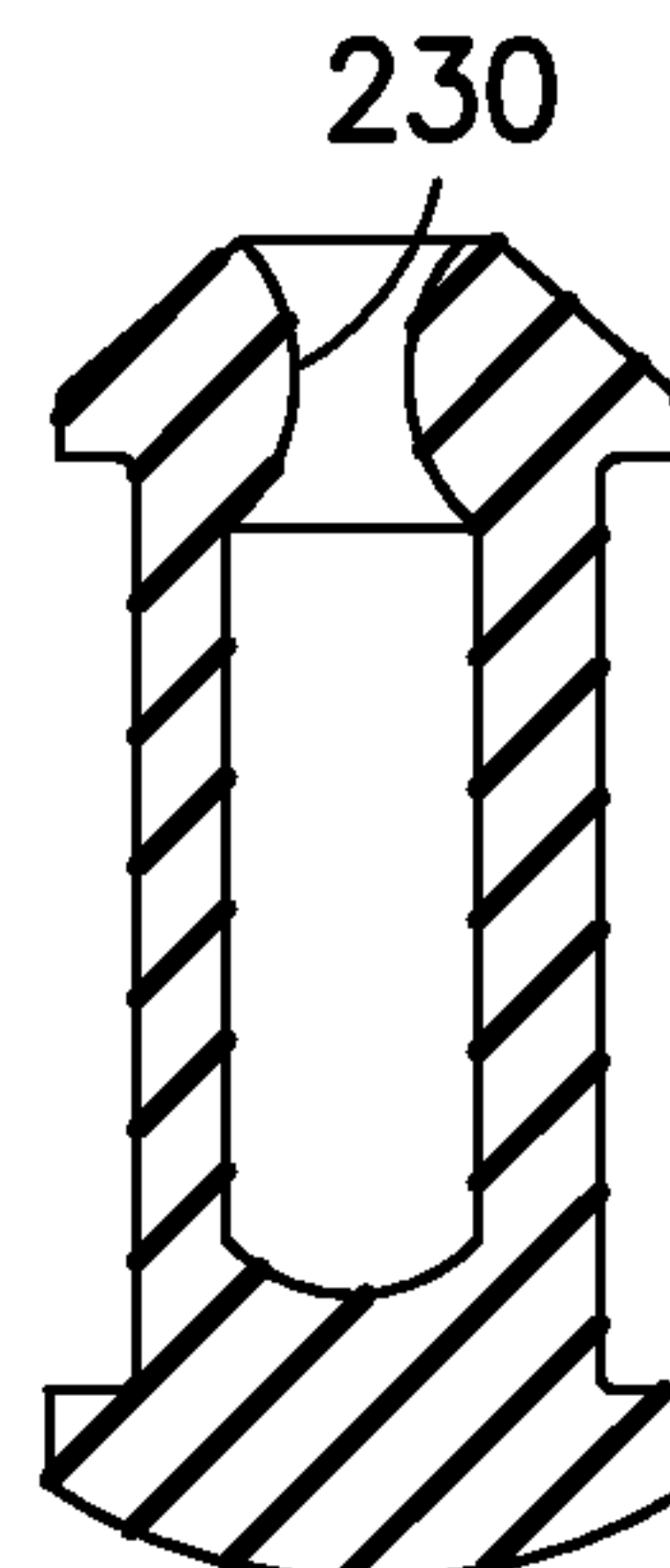
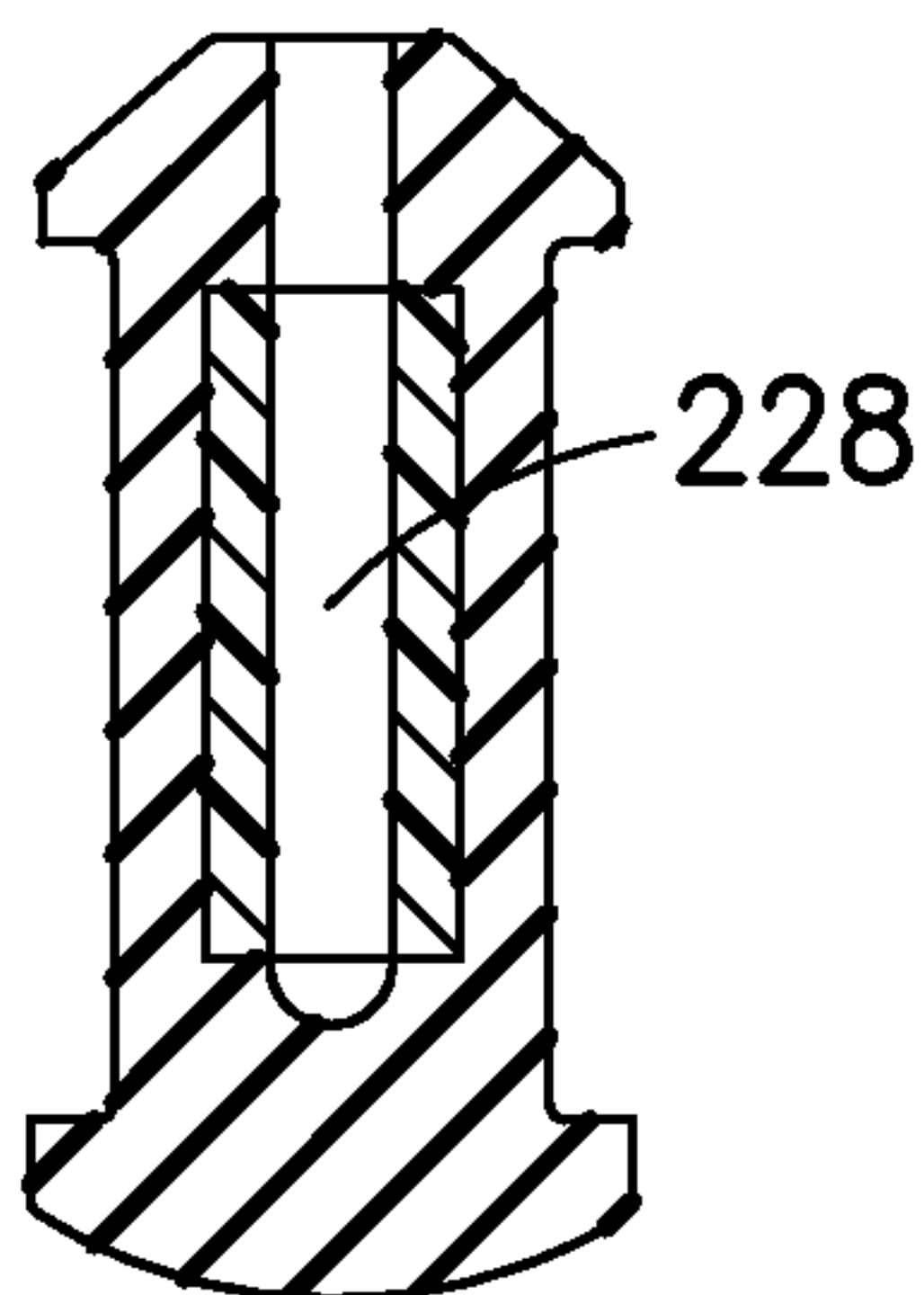
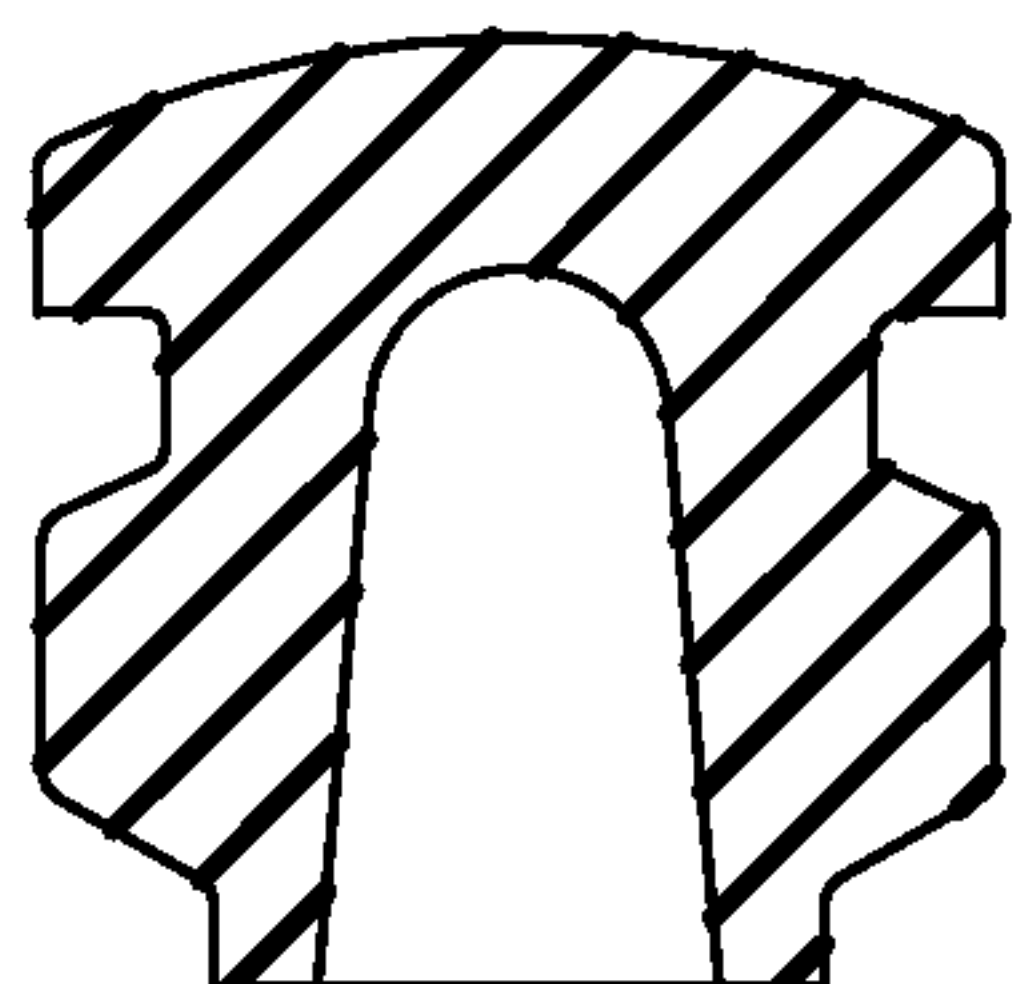
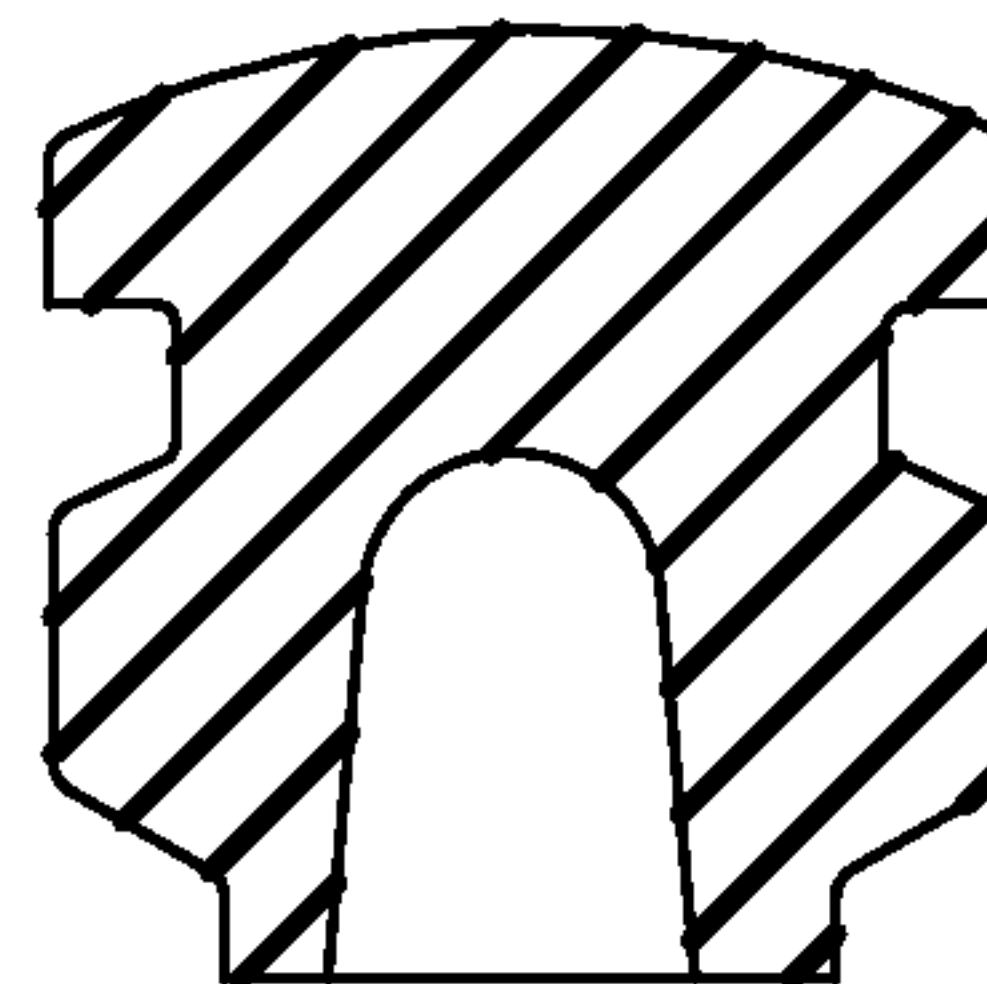
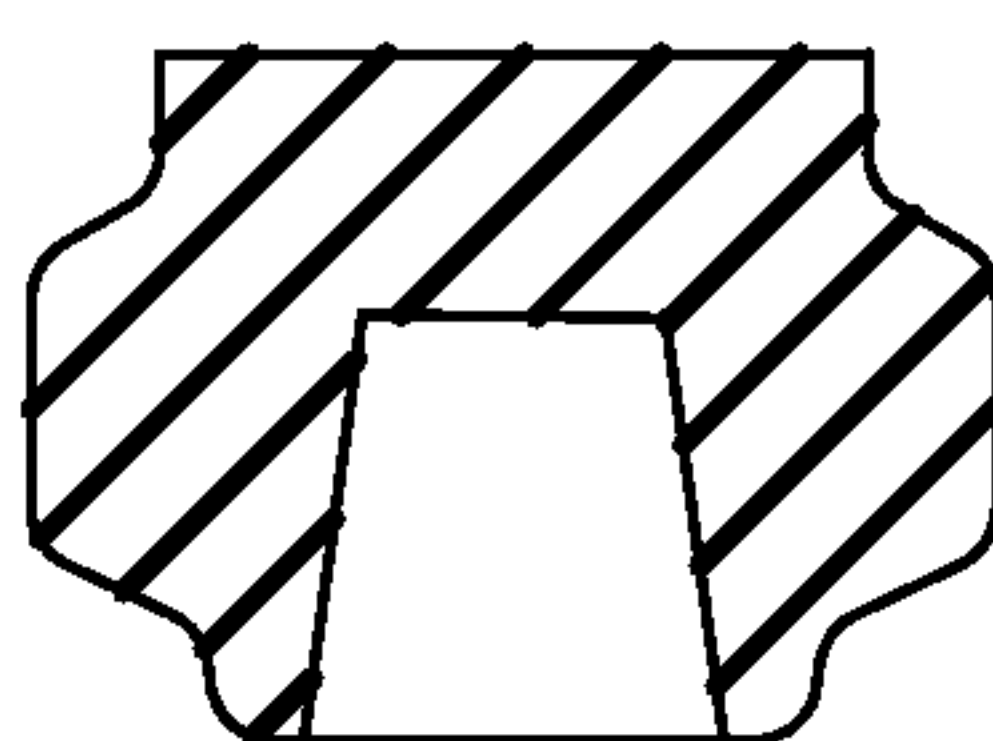
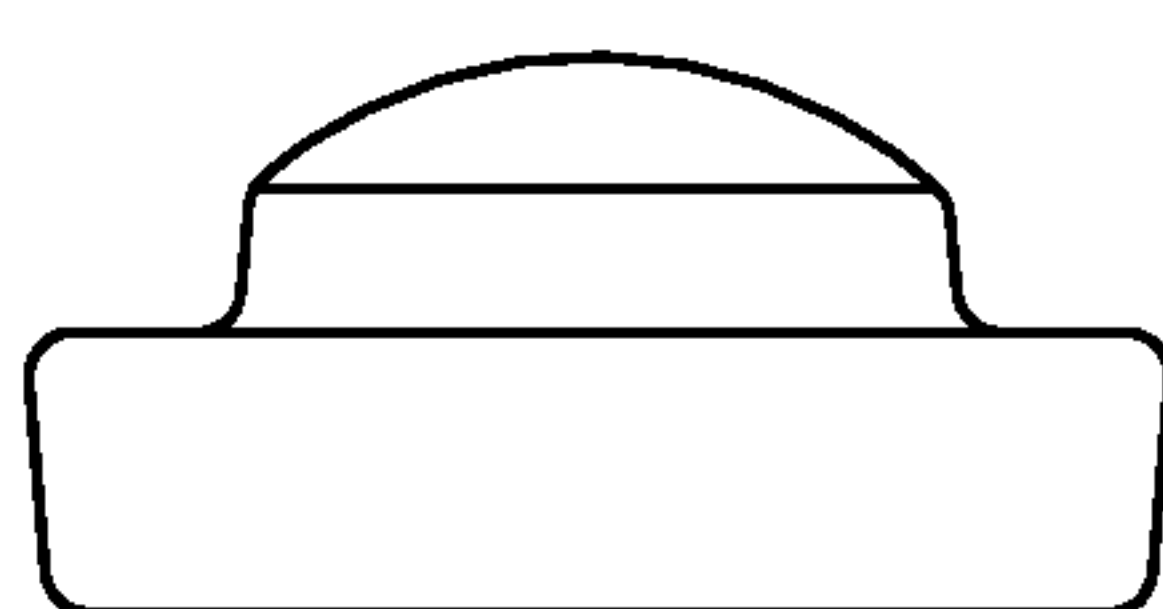
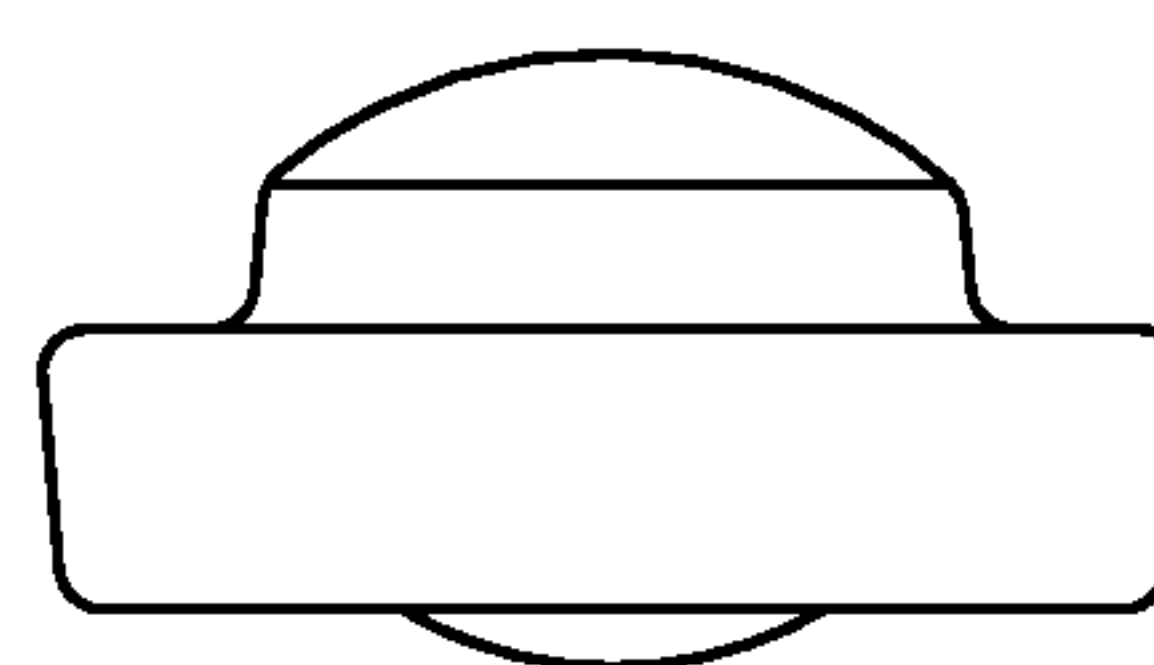
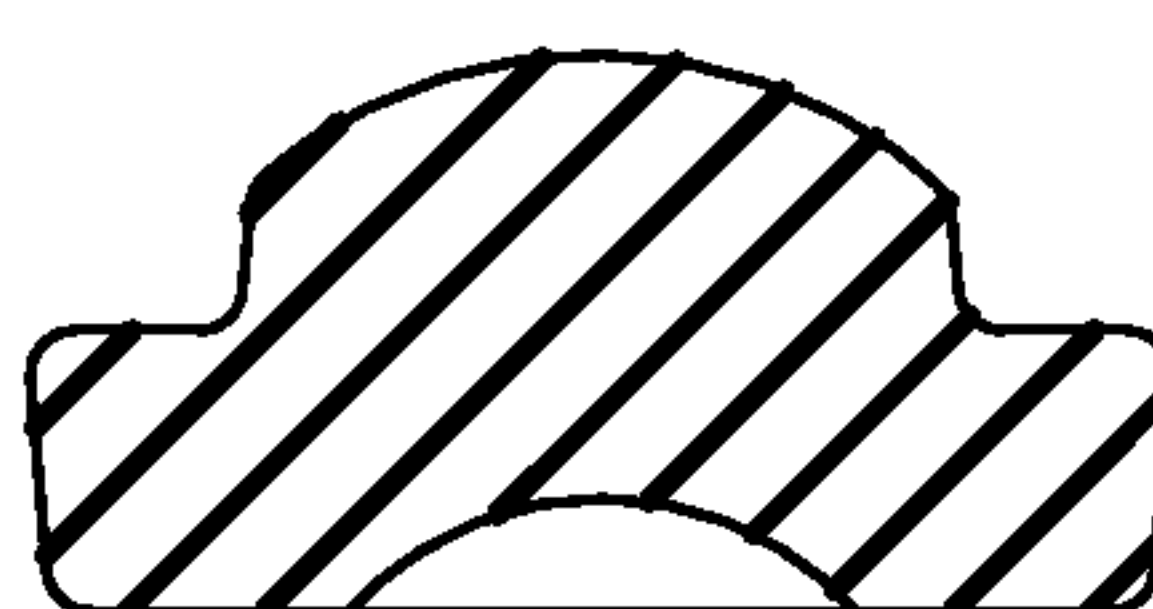


FIG.54

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**FIG. 55A****FIG. 55B****FIG. 55C****FIG. 55D****FIG. 55E****FIG. 55F****FIG. 55G**

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**FIG. 56A****FIG. 56B****FIG. 56C****FIG. 56D****FIG. 56E****FIG. 56F**

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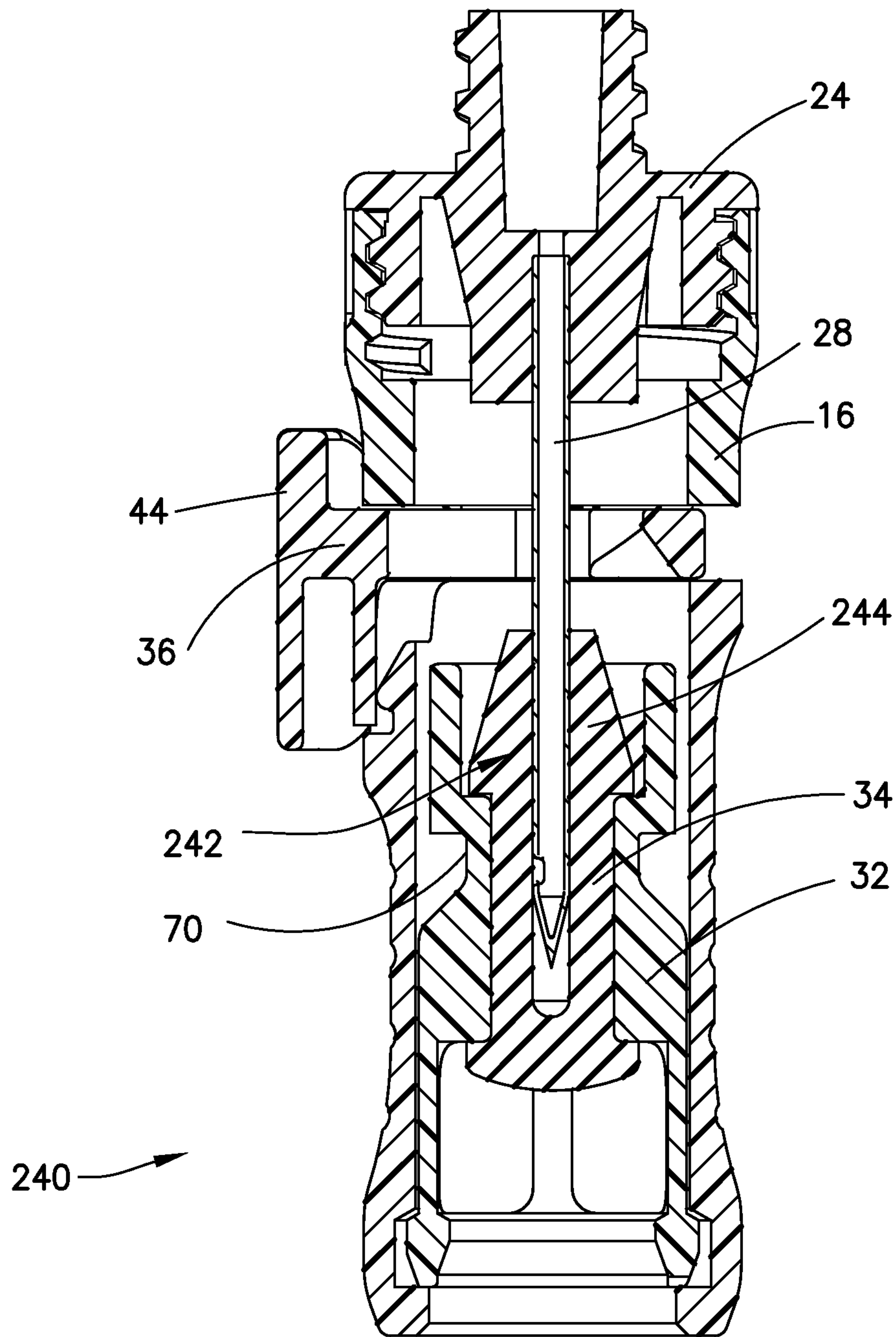


FIG.57A

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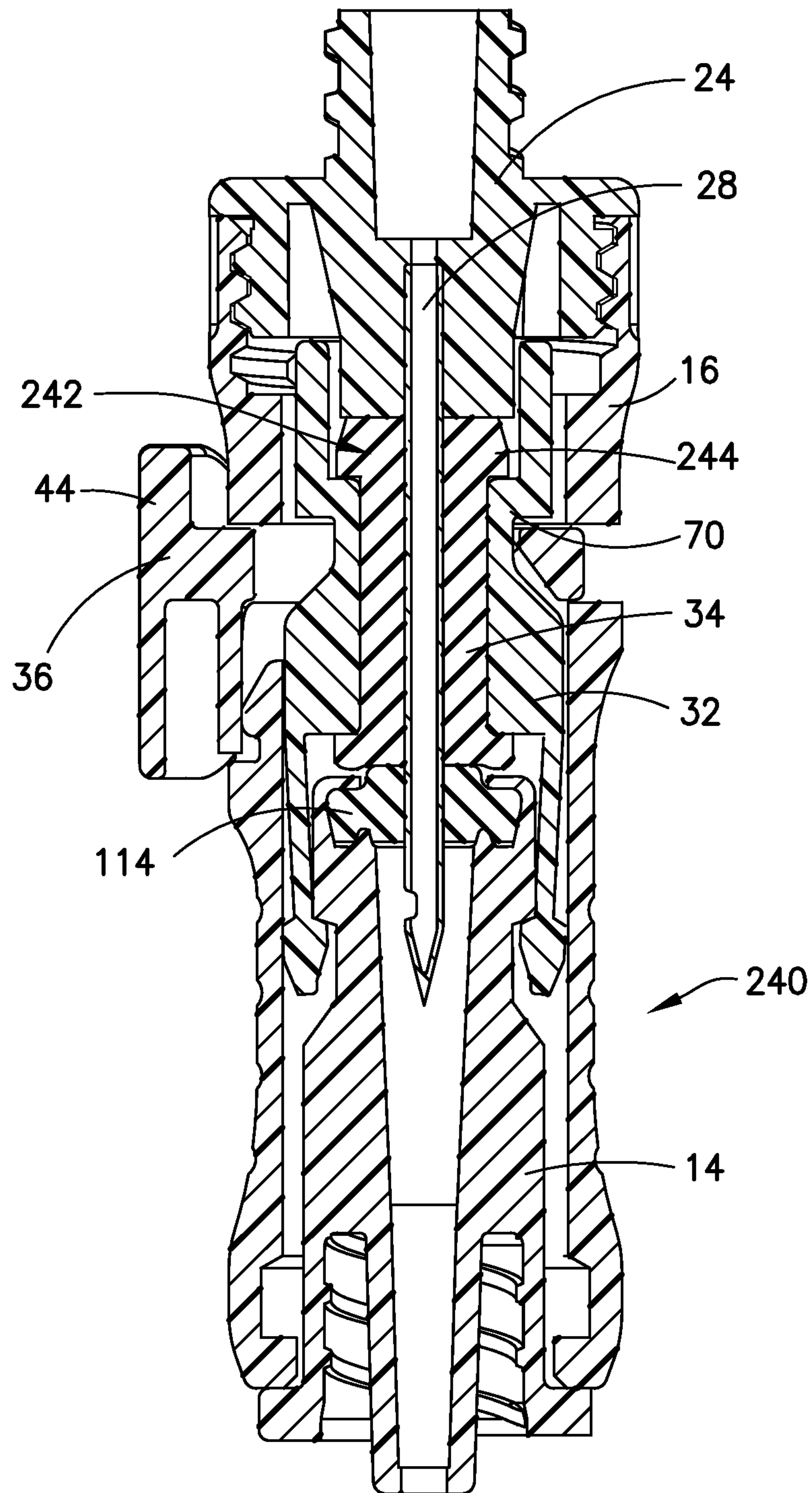


FIG. 57B

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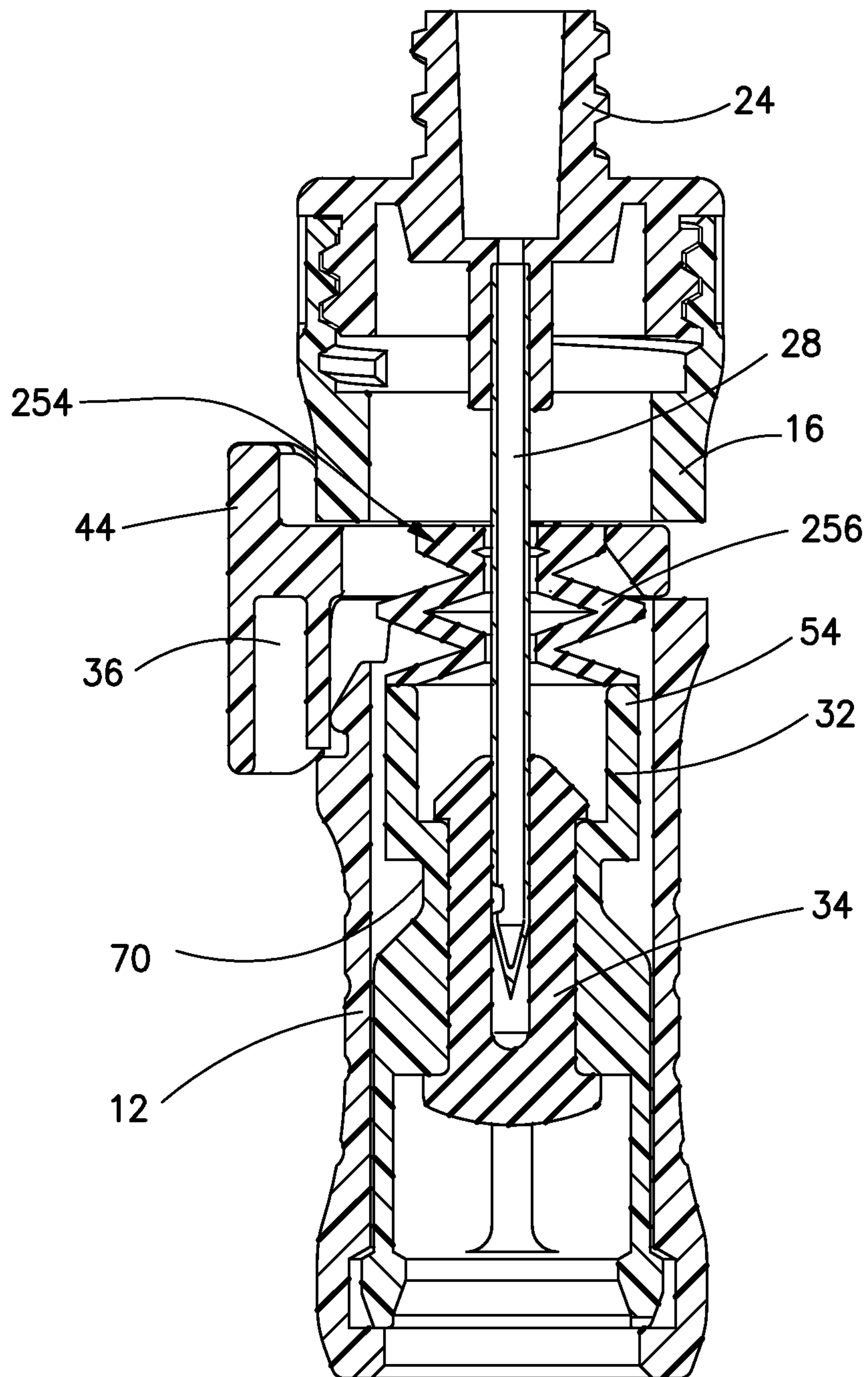


FIG. 58A

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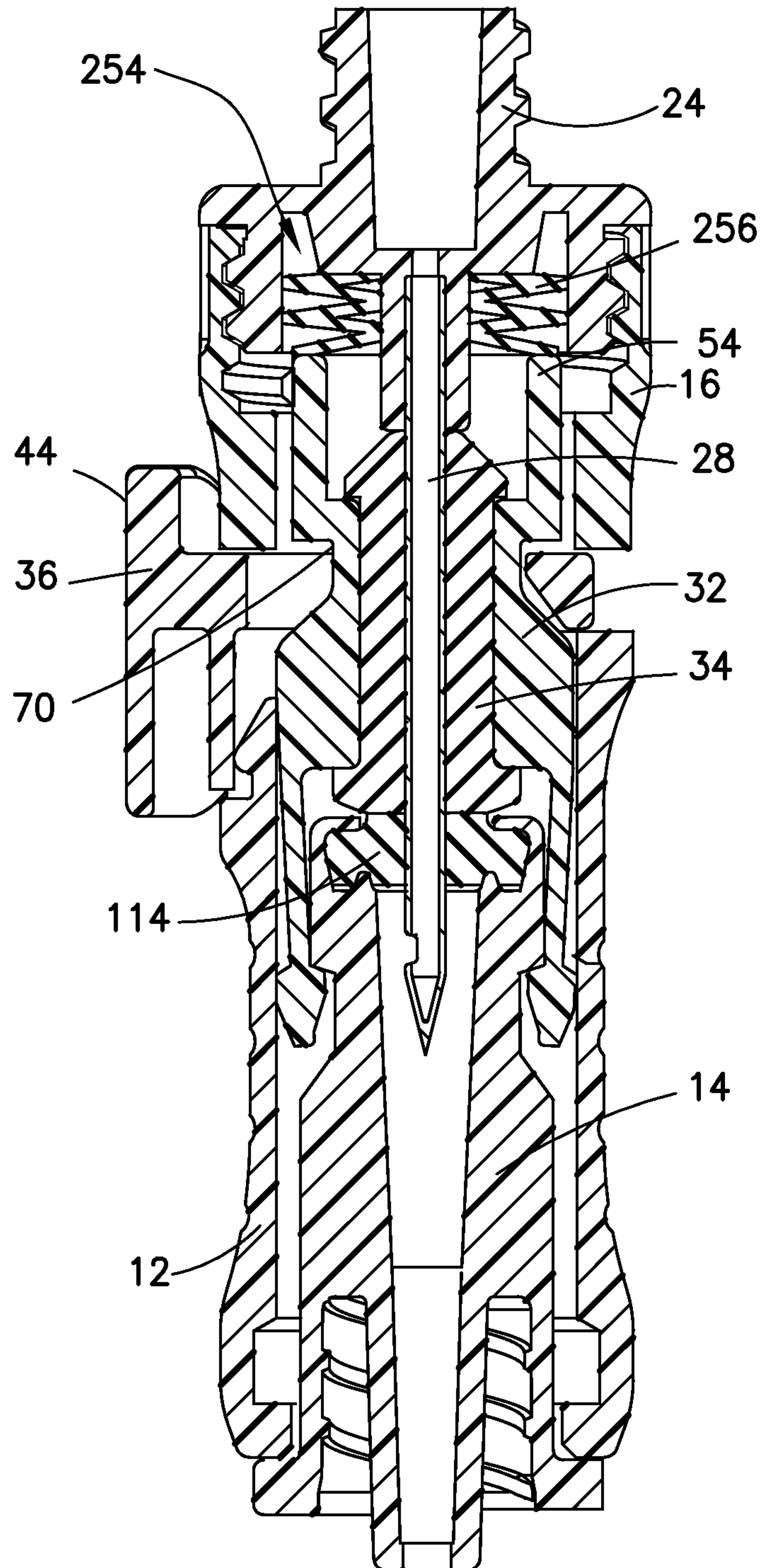


FIG. 58B

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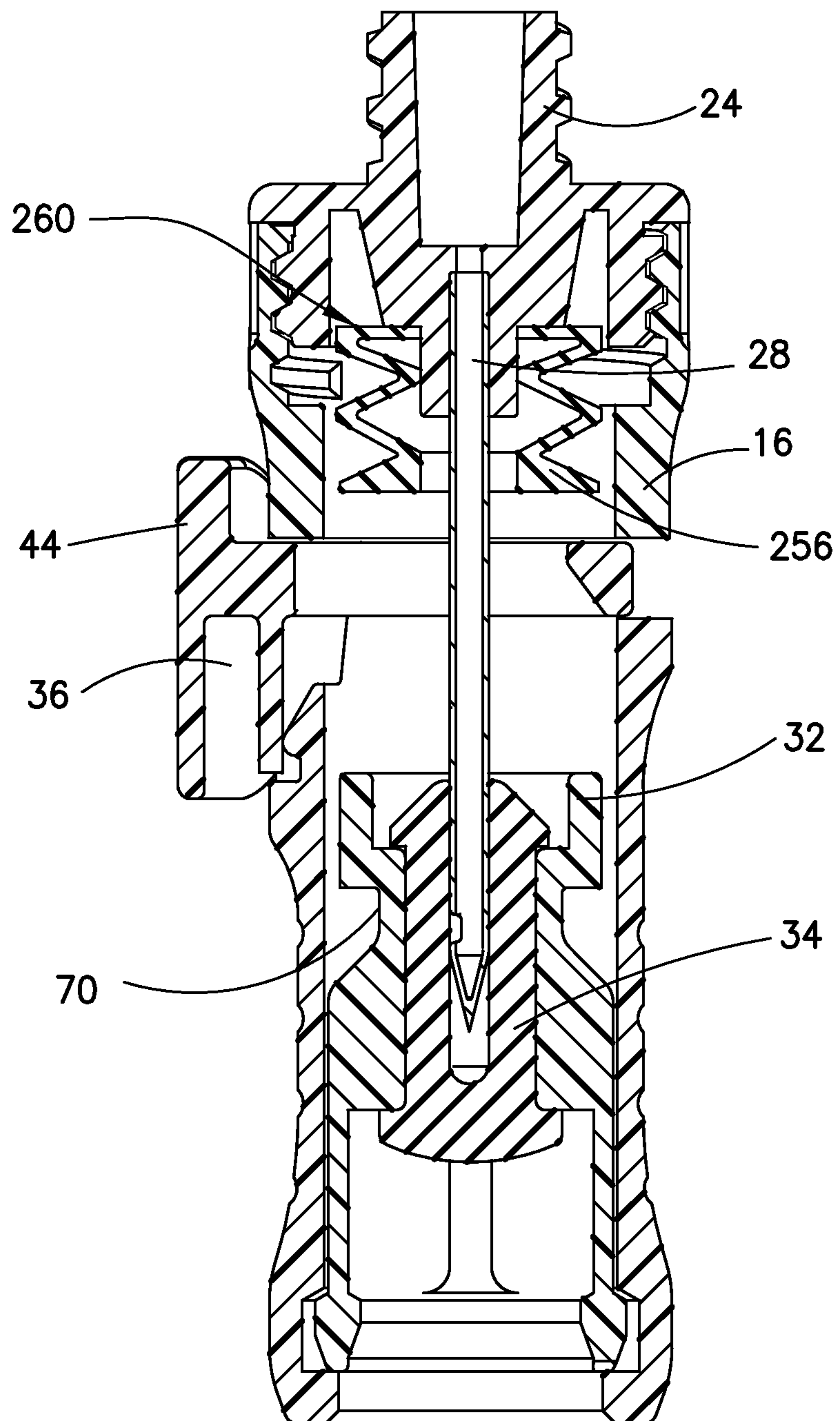
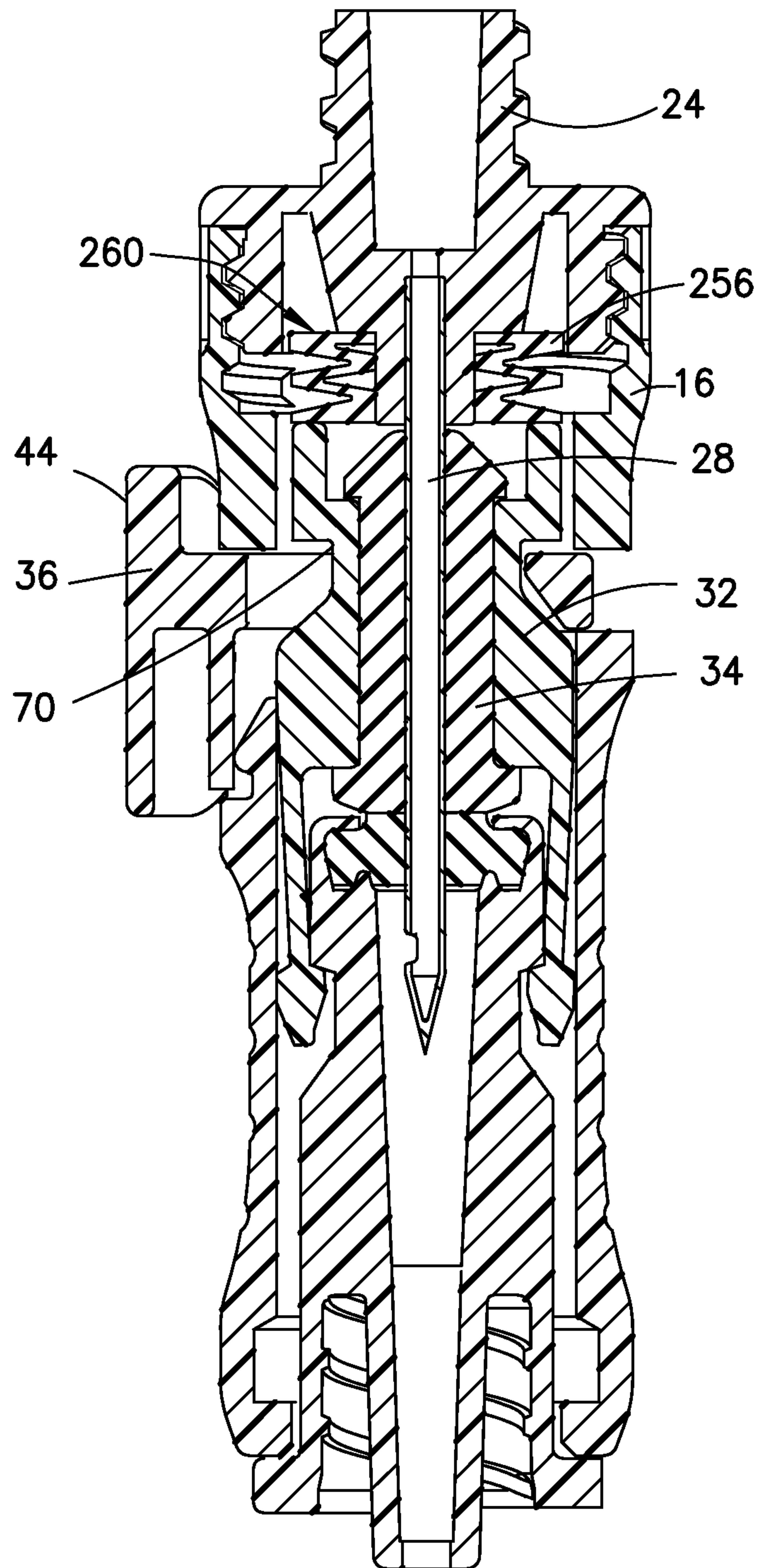


FIG. 59A

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**FIG. 59B**

