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CONFIRMATION NO. 9120

FILING RECEIPT

20322
SNELL & WILMER L.L.P. (Main)
400 EAST VAN BUREN
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Date Mailed: 08/02/2019

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The country code and number of your priority application, to be used for filing abroad under the Paris Convention, is US 62/879,883

Projected Publication Date: None, application is not eligible for pre-grant publication

Non-Publication Request: No

Early Publication Request: No

Title

RAPID-ENTRY FOOTWEAR HAVING AN EXPANDABLE ELASTIC SECTION

Statement under 37 CFR 1.55 or 1.78 for AIA (First Inventor to File) Transition Applications: No

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Provisional Application for Patent Cover Sheet

This is a request for filing a PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FOR PATENT under 37 CFR 1.53(c)

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Add

Title of Invention

RAPID-ENTRY FOOTWEAR HAVING AN EXPANDABLE ELASTIC SECTION

Attorney Docket Number (if applicable)

72724.03050

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Direct all correspondence to (select one):

The address corresponding to Customer Number

Firm or Individual Name

Customer Number

20322

The invention was made by an agency of the United States Government or under a contract with an agency of the United States Government.

No.

Yes, the invention was made by an agency of the United States Government. The U.S. Government agency name is:

Yes, the invention was under a contract with an agency of the United States Government. The name of the U.S. Government agency and Government contract number are:

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Applicant asserts small entity status under 37 CFR 1.27 or applicant certifies micro entity status under 37 CFR 1.29

- Applicant asserts small entity status under 37 CFR 1.27
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Signature	/C. Blake Steel/		Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2019-07-29	
First Name	Blake	Last Name	Steel	Registration Number (If appropriate)	67299

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TITLE: RAPID-ENTRY FOOTWEAR HAVING AN EXPANDABLE ELASTIC SECTION

INVENTORS: MICHAEL PRATT, STEVEN HERMANN, CRAIG CHENEY

BACKGROUND

[0001] 1. Field

[0002] The present disclosure relates to rapid-entry footwear.

[0003] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0004] Whether due to inconvenience or inability, donning shoes, including tying or otherwise securing the same, may present difficulties to some individuals. The present disclosure addresses this need.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] The accompanying drawings are included to provide a further understanding of the present disclosure and are incorporated in, and constitute a part of, this specification, illustrate various embodiments, and together with the description, serve to explain the principles of the disclosure.

[0006] FIG. 1 illustrates a rapid-entry shoe having an elastic section, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0007] FIG. 2 illustrates a rapid-entry shoe having an elastic section showing a foot partially inserted into the rapid-entry shoe, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0008] FIGS. 3A, 3B, and 3C illustrate progressive stages of a foot being inserted into a rapid-entry shoe, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0009] FIGS. 3D, 3E, 3F, and 3G illustrate rapid-entry shoes with elastic sections extending in different directions, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0010] FIGS. 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D are front schematic views of a rapid-entry shoe showing various configurations of elastic sections, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0011] FIG. 5 illustrates a rapid-entry shoe having a rear elastic section and a stabilizer; in accordance with various embodiments;

[0012] FIGS. 6A, 6B, and 6C illustrate progressive stages of a foot being inserted into a rapid-entry shoe, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0013] FIG. 7 illustrates a rapid-entry shoe having a rear deflectable section, in accordance with various embodiments;

[0014] FIGS. 8A, 8B, and 8C illustrate progressive stages of a foot being inserted into a rapid-entry shoe, in accordance with various embodiments; and

[0015] FIG. 9 illustrates a rapid-entry shoe having forward and rear elastic portions and a connector arm, in accordance with various embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0016] The detailed description of various embodiments herein makes reference to the accompanying drawings, which show various embodiments by way of illustration. While these various embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the disclosure, it should be understood that other embodiments may be realized and that logical, chemical, mechanical and structural changes may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the disclosure. Thus, the detailed description herein is presented for purposes of illustration only and not of limitation.

[0017] For example, the steps recited in any of the method or process descriptions may be executed in any order and are not necessarily limited to the order presented. Furthermore, any reference to singular includes plural embodiments, and any reference to more than one

component or step may include a singular embodiment or step. Also, any reference to attached, fixed, connected, coupled or the like may include permanent (e.g., integral), removable, temporary, partial, full, and/or any other possible attachment option. Any of the components may be coupled to each other via bolts, dowels, glue, stitching, welding, soldering, brazing, sleeves, brackets, clips or other means known in the art or hereinafter developed. Additionally, any reference to without contact (or similar phrases) may also include reduced contact or minimal contact.

[0018] As used herein, a shoe is any footwear including but not limited to a formal shoe, a dress shoe, a heel, a sports/athletic shoe (e.g., a tennis shoe, a golf shoe, a bowling shoe, a running shoe, a basketball shoe, a soccer shoe, a ballet shoe, etc.), a walking shoe, a sandal, a flip flop, a boot, a high top style boot, or other suitable type of shoe. Also, the rapid-entry shoe disclosed herein may be used by adults or children.

[0019] Although the features of rapid-entry shoes described herein may be implemented in a variety of different types of shoes, the disclosed features may be especially beneficial for boots and/or high-top shoes.

[0020] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIGS. 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4A, 4B, 4C, and 4D, a rapid-entry shoe 100 having an elastic section 110 disposed above a footbed and forward of a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe. Expansion of the elastic section 110 enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 100, and contraction of the elastic section 110 reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe. As used herein, the term “foot opening” refers generally to a cross-section of the hole defined by the rapid-entry shoe into which the foot is inserted. That is, the term foot opening does not necessarily refer to a top collar/topline opening of the rapid-entry

shoe, but may refer to a cross-section of the foot hole of the rapid-entry shoe at various locations within the foot hole of the rapid-entry shoe.

[0021] In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe 100 comprises an upper, with the upper having a rear side, a medial side, a lateral side, and a forward side. The elastic section 110 may be embedded within, may extend along, or may form a portion of one of the medial side and the lateral side. The elastic section 110, instead of necessarily being disposed on either of the lateral or medial sides of the shoe, may be disposed generally in a transition region between either the lateral or medial side of the shoe and the forward side of the shoe. In various embodiments, the elastic section 110 is disposed rearward and/or below the section of the shoe that is configured to engage the top of the user's foot during walking. That is, the elastic section 110 may be positioned behind (closer to the rear of the shoe) and/or below (closer to the footbed of the shoe) the portion of the shoe against which the top of the user's foot engages to lift the shoe during walking. In various embodiments, the elastic section 110 comprises a longitudinal axis that substantially matches the shape of the curvature of the forward side of the shoe 100. The elastic section may be a slit or other elongated feature that provides flexure to the shoe. In various embodiments, the elastic section is positioned to extend around the curve of the shoe that transitions from the predominantly vertically extending portion of the upper (e.g., the ankle support portion) to the predominantly horizontally extending portion of the upper (the toe box, etc.).

[0022] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIGS. 3D, 3E, 3F, and 3G, various examples of rapid-entry shoes are provided that show different orientations of the elastic sections. For example, rapid-entry shoe 100D may include two or more elastic sections 110D on one side of the shoe. That is, the rapid-entry shoe 100D may have multiple elastic sections

110 on each side of the shoe. The elastic sections 110D may be separate from each other, and thus may have standard, non-elastic material between the two elastic sections 110D. As shown in FIG. 3D, both of the elastic sections 110D may substantially match the shape/contour of the front/upper surface of the shoe (when viewed from the side, as shown in FIG. 3D).

[0023] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIG. 3E, the rapid-entry shoe 100E may include an elastic section 110E that comprises a downwardly extending portion and another portion that extends toward the front/upper portion of the shoe, as well as connect medial and lateral elastic sections across the upper of the foot. The downwardly extending portion may extend slightly forward. Also, FIG. 3E shows the stabilizer 150E extending along the rear of the shoe from the footbed (e.g., from below the footbed) to the topline/collar of the shoe 100E. In various embodiments, and with reference to FIG. 3F, the rapid-entry shoe 100F may have an elastic section 110F that extends downward and slightly rearward. In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe 100G includes an elastic section 110G that comprises a longitudinal axis that curves in a direction opposite the curve of the forward/upper surface of the shoe, when viewed from the side. That is, the elastic section 110G, instead of following the curve of the forward/upper surface of the shoe, may have a downward and/or rear facing concavity. Said differently, a center of curvature of the elastic section 110G may be toward the footbed and/or toward the rear of the shoe.

[0024] In various embodiments, the elastic section 110 comprises a first elastic section and the rapid-entry shoe further comprises a second elastic section. The first elastic section may be disposed on a lateral side of the rapid entry shoe and the second elastic section may be disposed on a medial side of the rapid entry shoe, according to various embodiments. FIGS. 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D provide front schematic views of the first and second elastic sections. The elastic

sections may extend parallel to each other, or may be angled relative to each other. For example, the first elastic section may extend at a first angle relative to a vertical axis that is perpendicular to the footbed of the shoe, and the second elastic section may extend at a second angle relative to the vertical axis. The first and second angle may be different. In various embodiments, the first and second elastic sections include a connecting piece that extends between the elastic sections, and thus extends across a forward side of the rapid entry-shoe.

[0025] In various embodiments, the elastic section(s) is configured to bias the rapid-entry shoe toward contraction of the foot opening. That is, the elastic section is configured to expand in a forward direction (expand the foot opening) and contract in a rearward direction (contract the foot opening). In various embodiments, and as mentioned above, the elastic section(s) may have a longitudinal axis, and the expansion of the elastic section may be perpendicular to its longitudinal axis. That is, the material of the elastic section may be configured to expand in a direction transverse to its length in response to a user's foot being inserted into the foot opening (see FIG. 3B, which shows the elastic section expanded). However, in various embodiments the elastic section may be configured to flex in a direction along its axis (e.g., may be an elongation zone of the rapid-entry shoe). In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe further includes a stabilizer 150 disposed on the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe and extending above the footbed of the rapid-entry shoe, the stabilizer configured to prevent downward collapse of the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe (e.g., the stabilizer may be configured to prevent downward and/or inward compression or bending of the shoe). The stabilizer may be embedded within, may extend along (internally or externally), and or may form a portion of the upper of the shoe.

[0026] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIGS. 5, 6A, 6B, and 6C, the rapid-entry shoe 200 includes a stabilizer 250 disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe 200 and

extending above a footbed of the rapid-entry shoe. The stabilizer 250 may include a base portion 252 and an elevated portion 254. The rapid-entry shoe 200 may also include a rear elastic section 210 disposed on the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe 200 above the footbed but below the elevated portion 254 of the stabilizer 250. Expansion of the elastic section 210 enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 200 and contraction of the elastic section 210 reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 200, according to various embodiments. That is, the elastic section is configured to expand in a rearward direction and contract in a forward direction, according to various embodiments.

[0027] In various embodiments, the stabilizer comprises two separate parts, a lateral portion and a medial portion. The lateral and medial portions may be separate and independent from each other. In various embodiments, the stabilizer 250 is a single, unitary structure. In various embodiments, the stabilizer 250 comprises an arch structure such that the base portion 252 comprises a first end and a second end. The first end may be coupled to or may extend from a medial side of a sole of the rapid-entry shoe 200 and the second end may be coupled to or may extend from a lateral side of the sole of the rapid-entry shoe 200. Accordingly, the elevated portion 254 may extend between the two ends and around the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed. In such embodiments, the arch structure of the stabilizer 250 defines a window, and the elastic section 210 may be disposed within the window. In various embodiments, the elastic portion 210 can be replaced by and/or supplemented with the deflectable portion 310 described below with reference to FIGS. 7, 8A, 8B, and 8C.

[0028] In various embodiments, the shoe may include a resiliently deformable element configured to facilitate closure of the rapid-entry shoe after a user's foot has been fully inserted into the shoe, e.g., as described in U.S. Patent No. 9,820,527, which is incorporated herein by

reference for all purposes. In various embodiments, the resiliently deformable element may be replaced by and/or supplemented with a biasing strap or other feature, such as elastic band 330 described below with reference to FIGS. 7, 8A, 8B, and 8C.

[0029] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIGS. 7, 8A, 8B, and 8C, the rapid-entry shoe 300 includes a stabilizer 350 and a deflectable section 310. The stabilizer 350 may be disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe and may extend above a footbed of the rapid-entry shoe. Similar to above, the stabilizer may include a base portion 352 and an elevated portion 354. In various embodiments, the deflectable section 310 is disposed below the elevated portion of the stabilizer 350 and is rotatably coupled to the stabilizer 350. For example, the deflectable section 310 may be a separate part that is hingedly coupled or pivotably coupled to the stabilizer 350. In various embodiments, the deflectable section 310 may extend from the stabilizer 350 via a living hinge. That is, the junction between the deflectable section 310 and the stabilizer 350 may comprise a scored portion or a narrowed portion to enable flexure of the deflectable section 310 relative to the stabilizer 350. Rearward rotation of the deflectable section 310 enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 300, and forward rotation of the deflectable section 310 reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 300.

[0030] The deflectable section 310 may be rigid or at least semi-rigid. In response to the user's foot being inserted into the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 300, the deflectable section 310 may rotate/deflect outward (i.e., rearward) in order to accommodate the foot during insertion. In various embodiments, the deflectable section 310 is rotatably coupled to the elevated portion 354 of the stabilizer 350. The deflectable section 310 may be spring-loaded (e.g., using a torsion spring) or may otherwise have its hinging movement biased (e.g., using compression springs) to move the deflectable section 310 back to its closed position after the user's foot has

been fully inserted into the shoe. The rapid-entry shoe 300 may further include an elastic band 330 coupled to or extending around the deflectable section 310 such that elastic band 330 biases the deflectable section forward. The elastic band 330 may be replaced by or supplemented with the resiliently deformable element described above with reference to FIGS. 5, 6A, 6B, and 6C. Further, the deflectable section 310 may be embedded within and/or may extend along a flexible section, similar to the elastic section 210 described above with reference to FIGS. 5, 6A, 6B, and 6C.

[0031] In various embodiments, and with reference to FIG. 9, the rapid-entry shoe 400 includes a forward elastic section 410A and a rear elastic section 410B. The rear elastic section 410B is disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above a footbed, and the forward elastic section 410A is disposed forward of the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed, according to various embodiments. The rapid-entry shoe 400 may further include a connector arm 440 extending along one of a lateral side and a medial side of the rapid-entry shoe 400 between the rear elastic section 410B and the forward elastic section 410A. Forward expansion of the forward elastic 410A section and/or rearward expansion of the rear elastic section 410B enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 400, and corresponding contraction of the forward elastic section 410A and the rear elastic section 410B reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe 400. In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe 400 may combine one or more features previously described. For example, the forward elastic section 410A may be similar to the elastic section 110 described above. Similarly, the rear elastic section 410B may be similar to the elastic section 110 but placed on the rear of the shoe. Accordingly, the details and configurations of the various embodiments shown and described herein may be combined in

various manners. That is, features from one figure may be implemented and combined with features of another figure.

[0032] The connector arm 440 may be a strap or other retention feature that runs along the side of the shoe between the elastic sections. In various embodiments, the connector arm 440 comprises an elastic material. The connector arm 440 may have a forward portion and a rear portion, with a central connection point disposed between the forward portion and the rear portion. The forward portion and the rear portion of the connector arm 440 may be configured to at least partially rotate about the central connection point relative to each other. For example, the central connection point may be configured to exert a rotational bias on the forward and/or rear portions of the connector arm 440, thereby biasing the elastic sections 410A and 410B together to retain the shoe about the user's foot. The connector arm 440 may have a forward portion and a rear portion, with a central locating point disposed between the forward portion and the rear portion that would concentrate elastic properties of the connector arms front and rear when, that can allow the forces of the elongation of the front and rear of the shoes to be applied at the same time, or positioned to allow the elastic arms front and rear to elongate forward and backward one after the other. In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe may also include a second connector arm on the opposing side of the rapid-entry shoe. In various embodiments, the rapid-entry shoe further includes semi-rigid inserts 420A, 420B that are configured to move between and/or along the forward and rear elastic sections 410A, 410B. The semi-rigid inserts 420A, 420B may be connected to the upper, and may be configured to support the elastic sections 410A, 410B.

[0033] Benefits, other advantages, and solutions to problems have been described herein with regard to specific embodiments. Furthermore, the connecting lines shown in the various figures

contained herein are intended to represent exemplary functional relationships and/or physical couplings between the various elements. It should be noted that many alternative or additional functional relationships or physical connections may be present in a practical system. However, the benefits, advantages, solutions to problems, and any elements that may cause any benefit, advantage, or solution to occur or become more pronounced are not to be construed as critical, required, or essential features or elements of the disclosure.

[0034] The steps recited in any of the method or process descriptions may be executed in any order and are not necessarily limited to the order presented. Furthermore, any reference to singular includes plural embodiments, and any reference to more than one component or step may include a singular embodiment or step. Elements and steps in the figures are illustrated for simplicity and clarity and have not necessarily been rendered according to any particular sequence. For example, steps that may be performed concurrently or in different order are illustrated in the figures to help to improve understanding of embodiments of the present disclosure.

[0035] Any reference to attached, fixed, connected or the like may include permanent, removable, temporary, partial, full and/or any other possible attachment option. Additionally, any reference to without contact (or similar phrases) may also include reduced contact or minimal contact. Surface shading lines may be used throughout the figures to denote different parts or areas but not necessarily to denote the same or different materials. In some cases, reference coordinates may be specific to each figure.

[0036] Systems, methods and apparatus are provided herein. In the detailed description herein, references to “one embodiment”, “an embodiment”, “various embodiments”, etc., indicate that the embodiment described may include a particular feature, structure, or characteristic, but every

embodiment may not necessarily include the particular feature, structure, or characteristic. Moreover, such phrases are not necessarily referring to the same embodiment. Further, when a particular feature, structure, or characteristic is described in connection with an embodiment, it is submitted that it is within the knowledge of one skilled in the art to affect such feature, structure, or characteristic in connection with other embodiments whether or not explicitly described. After reading the description, it will be apparent to one skilled in the relevant art(s) how to implement the disclosure in alternative embodiments.

[0037] Furthermore, no element, component, or method step in the present disclosure is intended to be dedicated to the public regardless of whether the element, component, or method step is explicitly recited in the claims. No claim element is intended to invoke 35 U.S.C. 112(f) unless the element is expressly recited using the phrase “means for.” As used herein, the terms “comprises”, “comprising”, or any other variation thereof, are intended to cover a non-exclusive inclusion, such that a process, method, article, or apparatus that comprises a list of elements does not include only those elements but may include other elements not expressly listed or inherent to such process, method, article or apparatus.

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A rapid-entry shoe, according to the various details and embodiments disclosed herein.
2. A rapid-entry shoe comprising:
an elastic section disposed above a footbed and forward of a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe;
wherein expansion of the elastic section enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe, and wherein contraction of the elastic section reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe.
3. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 2, wherein:
the rapid-entry shoe comprises an upper; and
the upper comprises the rear side, a medial side, a lateral side, and a forward side.
4. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 3, wherein the elastic section is embedded within, extends along, or forms a portion of one of the medial side and the lateral side.
5. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 4, wherein the elastic section is a first elastic section and the rapid-entry shoe further comprises a second elastic section, wherein the second elastic section is embedded within, extends along, or forms a portion of the other of the medial side and the lateral side.
6. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 5, wherein the first elastic section is parallel to the second elastic section are parallel to each other.

7. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 5, wherein the first elastic section extends at a first angle relative to a vertical axis that is perpendicular to the footbed, and wherein the second elastic section extends at a second angle relative to the vertical axis.

8. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 7, wherein the first angle is different than the second angle.

9. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 5, wherein a connecting piece extends between the first elastic section and the second elastic section across a forward side of the rapid-entry shoe.

10. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 3, wherein the elastic section is embedded within, extends along, or forms a portion of one of a lateral transition region defined between the lateral side and forward side and a medial transition region defined between the medial side and the forward side.

11. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 2, wherein the elastic section is configured to bias the rapid-entry shoe toward contraction of the foot opening.

12. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 2, wherein the elastic section is configured to expand in a forward direction and contract in a rearward direction.

13. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 2, wherein the elastic section comprises a longitudinal axis, wherein expansion and retraction of the elastic section is perpendicular to the longitudinal axis.

14. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 2, further comprising a stabilizer disposed on the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe and extending above the footbed of the rapid-entry shoe, the stabilizer configured to prevent downward collapse of the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe.

15. A rapid-entry shoe comprising:

a stabilizer disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe and extending above a footbed of the rapid-entry shoe, the stabilizer comprising a base portion and an elevated portion; and

an elastic section disposed on the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed but below the elevated portion of the stabilizer;

wherein expansion of the elastic section enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe, and wherein contraction of the elastic section reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe.

16. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 15, wherein the stabilizer comprises an arch structure such that the base portion comprises a first end and a second end, the first end coupled to or extending from a medial side of a sole of the rapid-entry shoe and the second end coupled to or extending from a lateral side of the sole of the rapid-entry shoe, wherein the elevated portion extends between the first end and the second end and around the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed.

17. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 16, wherein the arch structure of the stabilizer defines a window, wherein the elastic section is disposed within the window.

18. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 17, further comprising a resiliently deformable element.

19. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 15, wherein the elastic section is configured to expand in a rearward direction and contract in a forward direction.

20. A rapid-entry shoe comprising:

a stabilizer disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe and extending above a footbed of the rapid-entry shoe, the stabilizer comprising a base portion and an elevated portion; and

a deflectable section disposed below the elevated portion of the stabilizer and rotatably coupled to the stabilizer;

wherein rearward rotation of the deflectable section enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe, and wherein forward rotation of the deflectable section reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe.

21. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 20, wherein the deflectable section is at least one of semi-rigid and rigid.

22. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 20, wherein the deflectable section is rotatably coupled to the elevated portion of the stabilizer.

23. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 20, wherein the stabilizer comprises an arch structure such that the base portion comprises a first end and a second end, the first end coupled to or extending from a medial side of a sole of the rapid-entry shoe and the second end coupled to or extending from a lateral side of the sole of the rapid-entry shoe, wherein the elevated portion extends between the two ends and around the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed.

24. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 20, further comprising an elastic band coupled to or extending around the deflectable section such that the elastic band biases the deflectable section forward.

25. A rapid-entry shoe comprising:

a rear elastic section disposed on a rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above a footbed;

a forward elastic section disposed forward of the rear side of the rapid-entry shoe above the footbed; and

a connector arm extending along one of a lateral side and a medial side of the rapid-entry shoe between the rear elastic section and the forward elastic section;

wherein at least one of forward expansion of the forward elastic section and rearward expansion of the rear elastic section enlarges a foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe, and wherein contraction of at least one of the forward elastic section and the rear elastic section reduces the foot opening of the rapid-entry shoe.

26. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 25, wherein the connector arm comprises an elastic material.

27. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 25, wherein the connector arm comprises a forward portion and a rear portion, with a central connection point disposed between the forward portion and the rear portion.

28. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 27, wherein the forward portion and the rear portion are configured to partially rotate about the central connection point relative to each other.

29. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 28, wherein the central connection point comprises a rotational biasing member.

30. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 25, wherein the connector arm is a first connector arm, wherein the rapid-entry shoe further comprises a second connector arm extending along the other of the lateral side and the medial side of the rapid-entry shoe between the rear elastic section and the forward elastic section.

31. The rapid-entry shoe of claim 25, further comprising semi-rigid inserts configured to move between or along at least one of the forward elastic section and the rear elastic section.

100

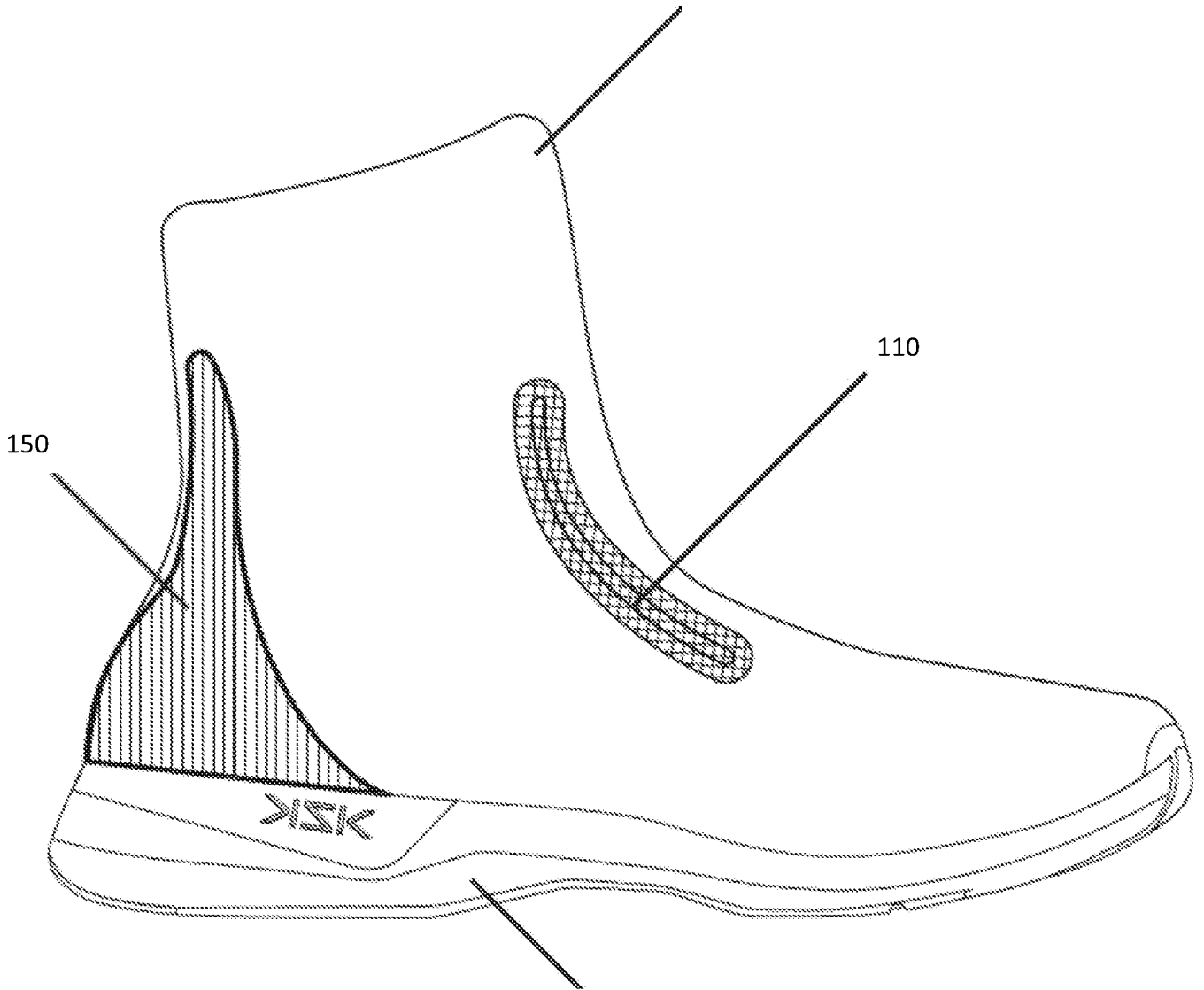


FIG. 1

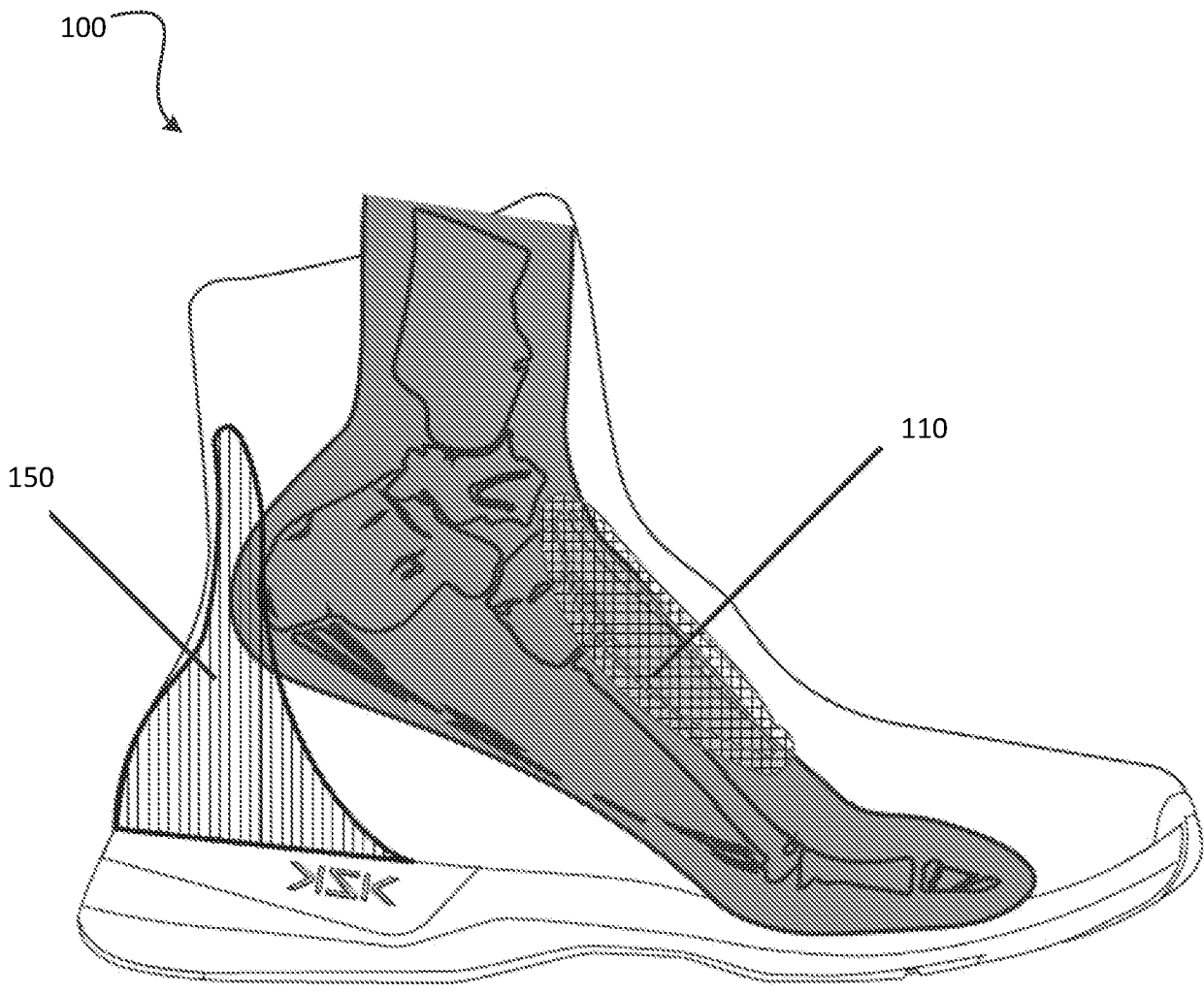


FIG. 2

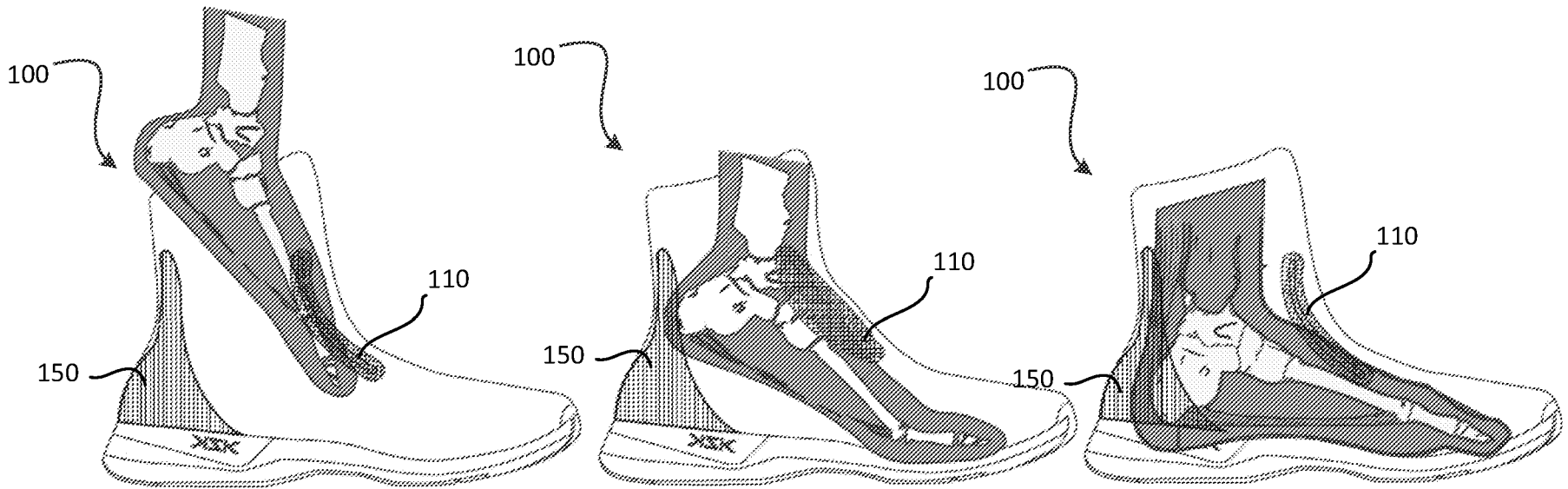


FIG. 3A

FIG. 3B

FIG. 3C

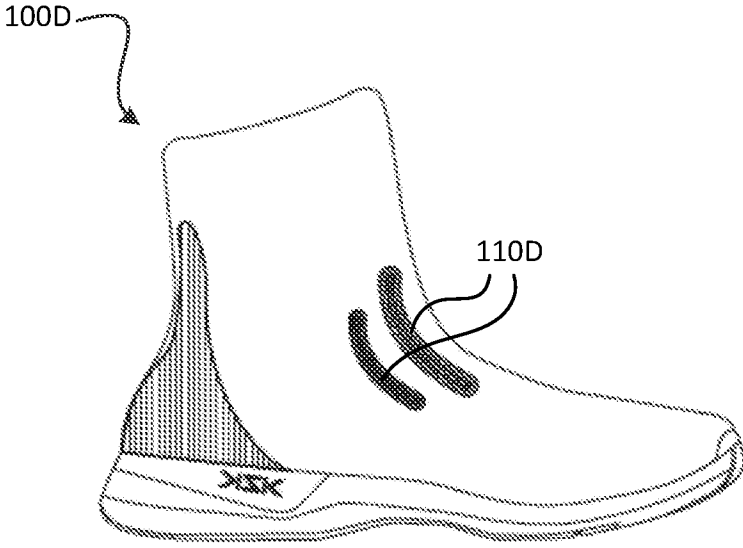


FIG. 3D

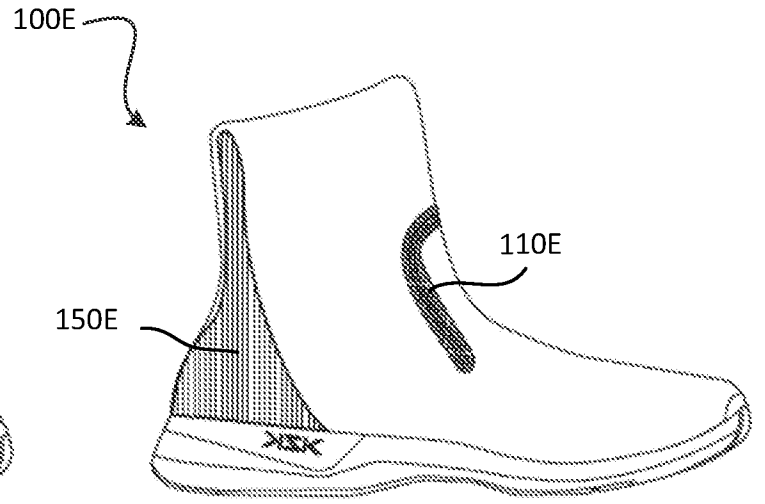


FIG. 3E

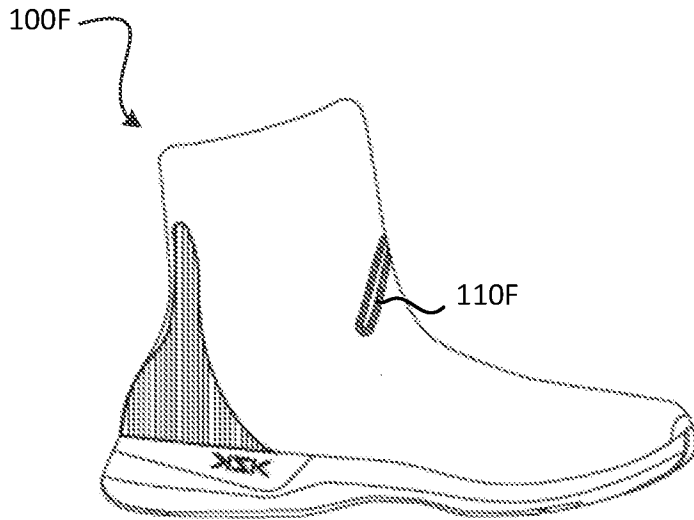


FIG. 3F

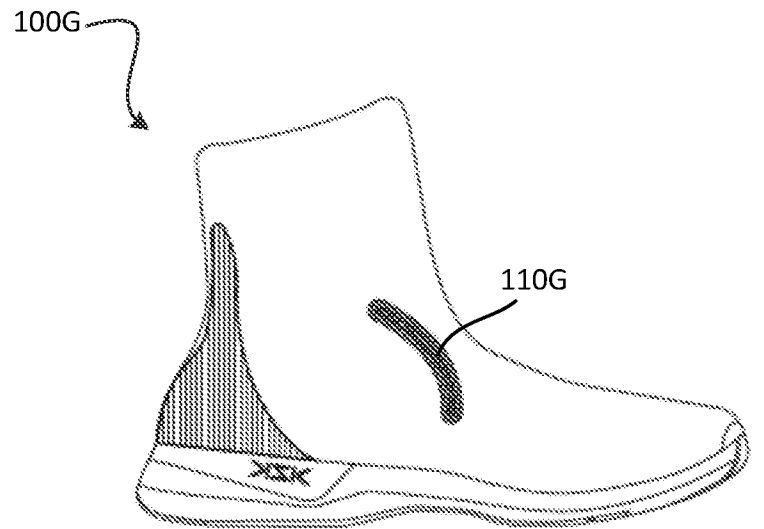


FIG.
3G

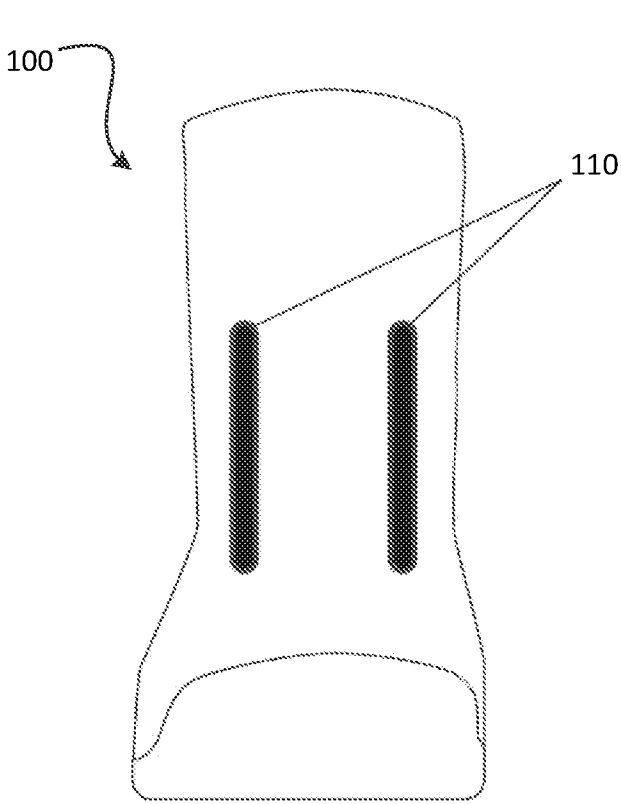


FIG. 4A

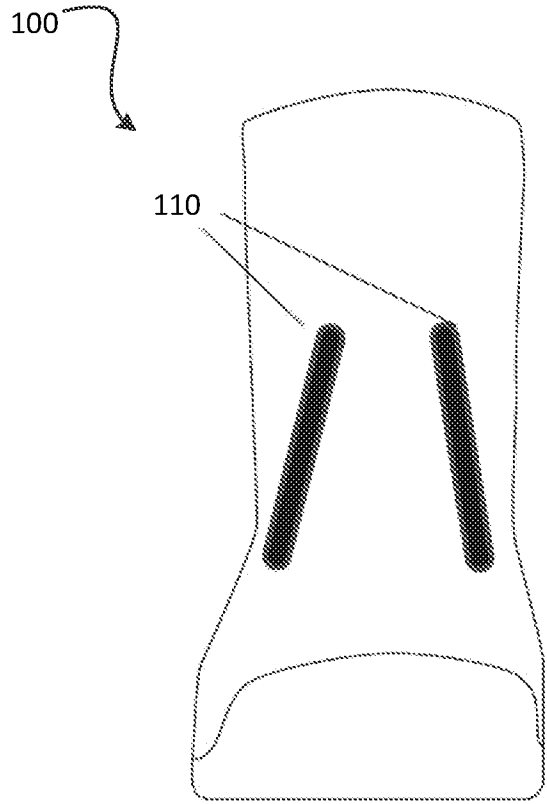


FIG. 4B

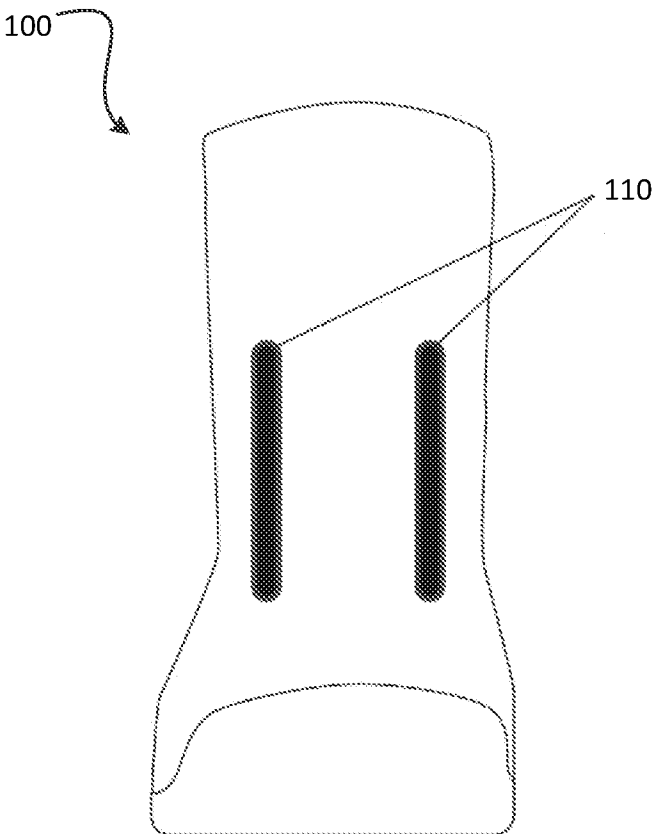


FIG. 4C

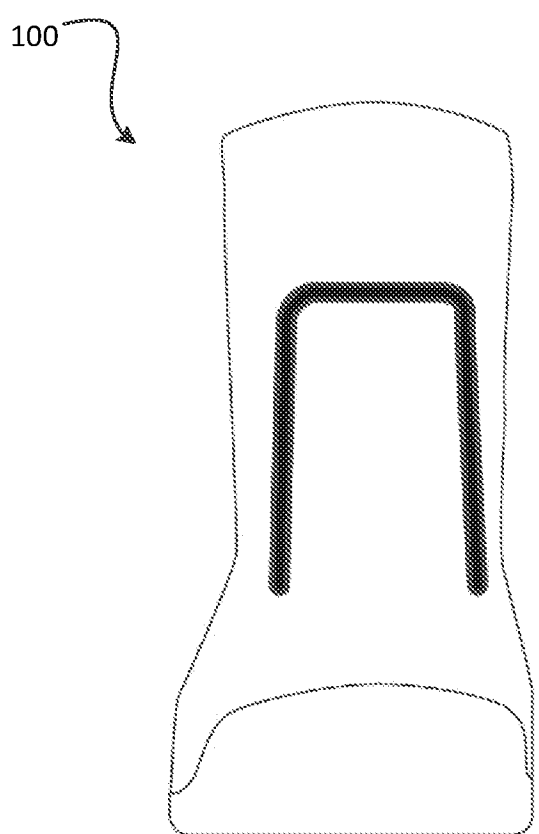


FIG. 4D

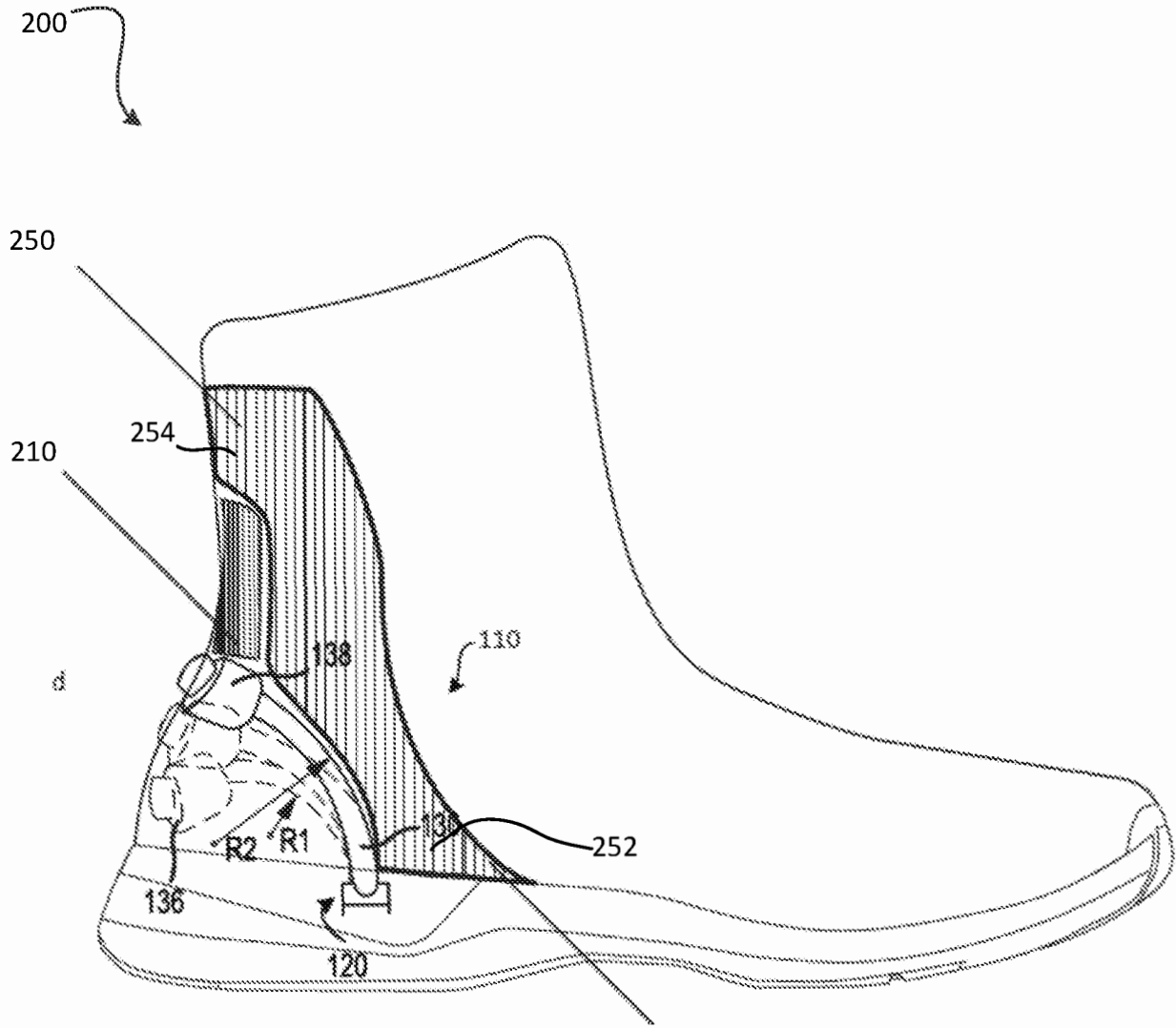


FIG. 5

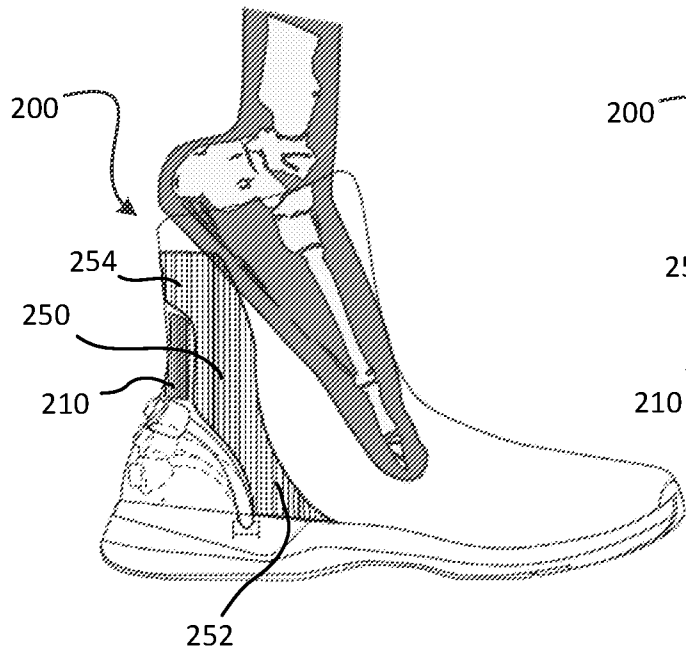


FIG. 6A

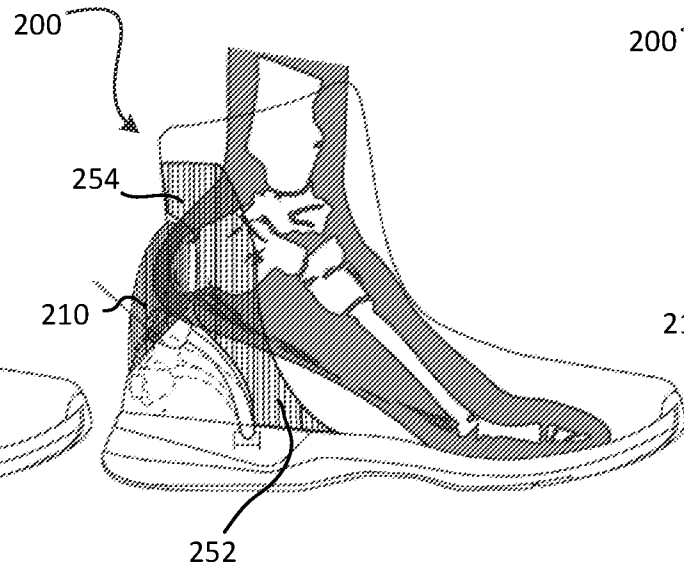


FIG. 6B

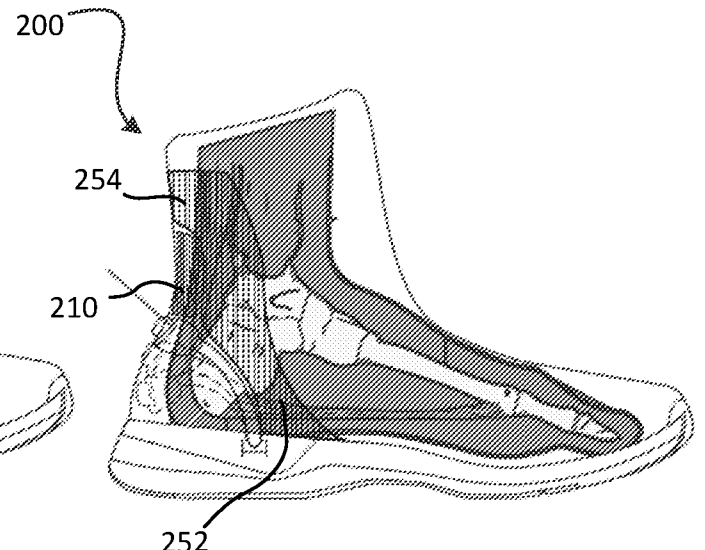


FIG. 6C

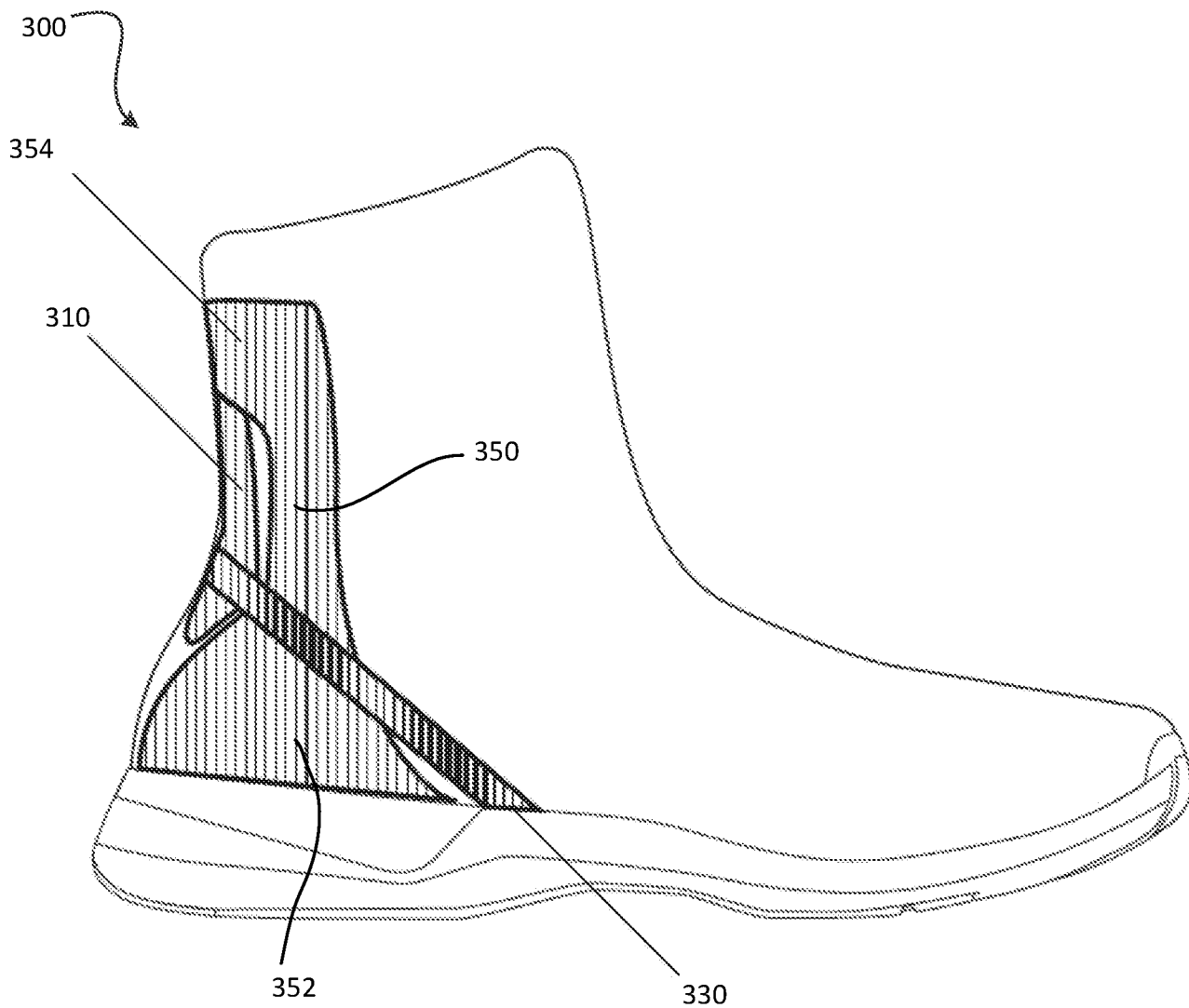


FIG. 7

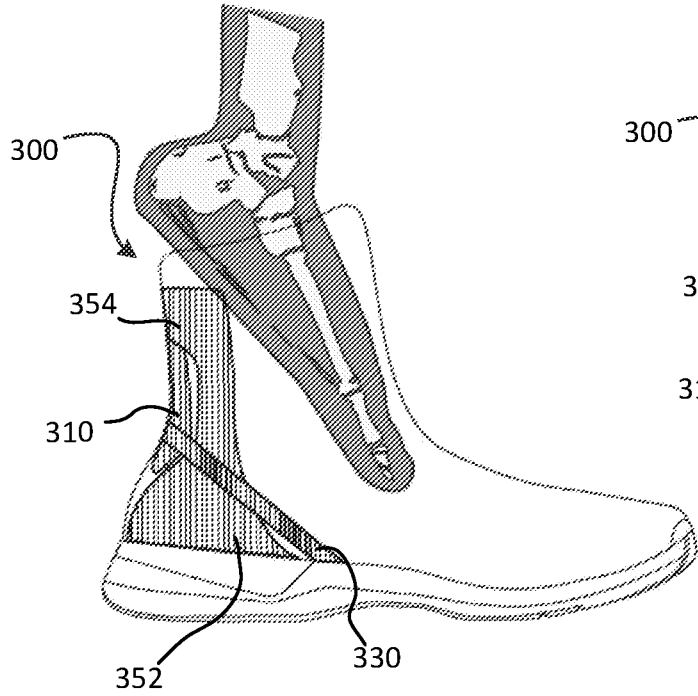


FIG. 8A

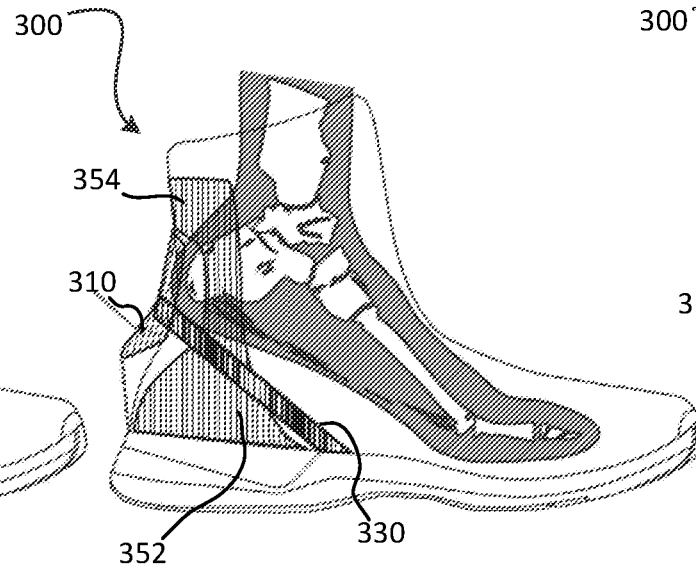


FIG. 8B

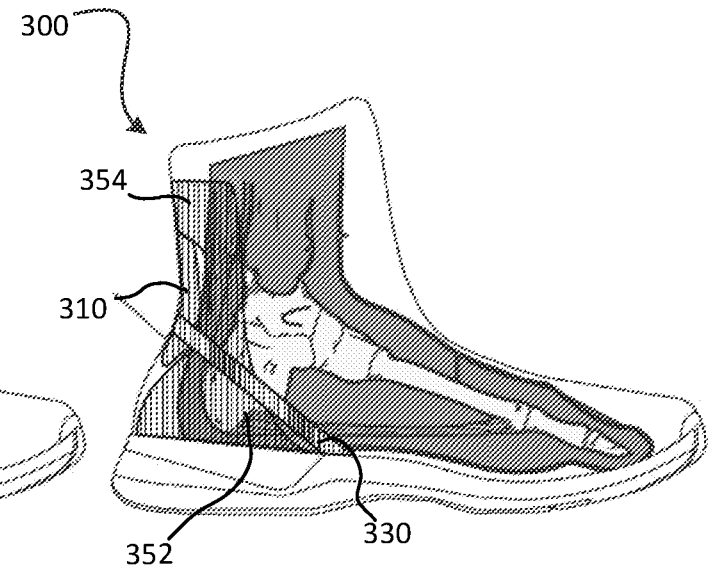


FIG. 8C

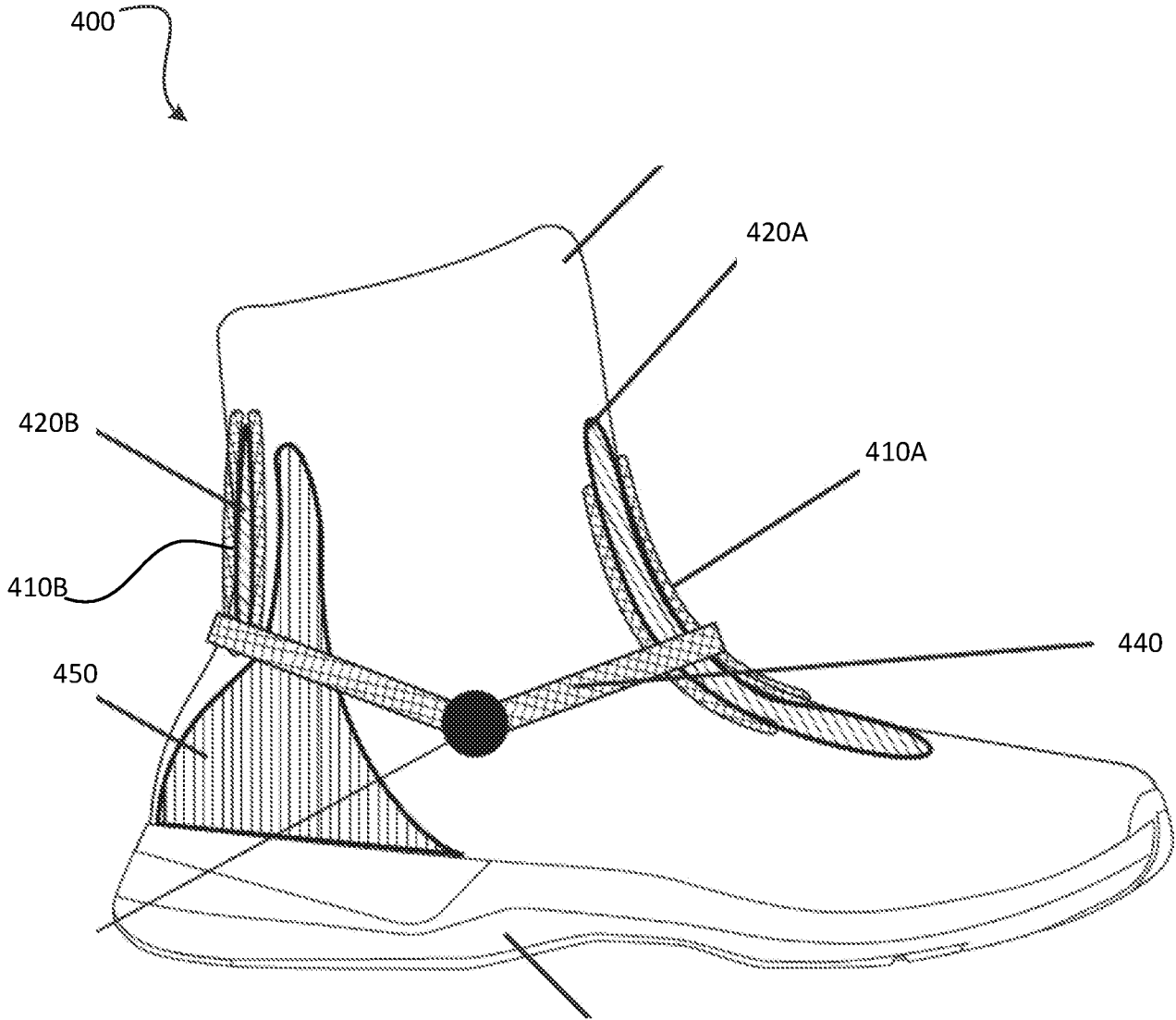


FIG. 9

Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

Application Number:				
Filing Date:				
Title of Invention:	RAPID-ENTRY FOOTWEAR HAVING AN EXPANDABLE ELASTIC SECTION			
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	MICHAEL PRATT			
Filer:	C Blake Steel/Carrie Irvine			
Attorney Docket Number:	72724.03050			
Filed as Large Entity				
Filing Fees for Provisional				
Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Basic Filing:				
PROVISIONAL APPLICATION FILING	1005	1	280	280
Pages:				
Claims:				
Miscellaneous-Filing:				
Petition:				
Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:				
Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:				

Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Extension-of-Time:				
Miscellaneous:				
Total in USD (\$)				280

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	36719105
Application Number:	62879883
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	9120
Title of Invention:	RAPID-ENTRY FOOTWEAR HAVING AN EXPANDABLE ELASTIC SECTION
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	MICHAEL PRATT
Customer Number:	20322
Filer:	C Blake Steel/Carrie Irvine
Filer Authorized By:	C Blake Steel
Attorney Docket Number:	72724.03050
Receipt Date:	29-JUL-2019
Filing Date:	
Time Stamp:	17:05:21
Application Type:	Provisional

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	DA
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$280
RAM confirmation Number	E20197SH05521499
Deposit Account	192814
Authorized User	Carrie Irvine

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

37 CFR 1.16 (National application filing, search, and examination fees)

37 CFR 1.17 (Patent application and reexamination processing fees)

File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Provisional Cover Sheet (SB16)	7272403050_PCS.pdf	2032506	no	3
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Warnings:					
Information:					
2		7272403050_Prov_Application.pdf	120705	yes	18
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	Specification		1	12	
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Information:					
Total Files Size (in bytes):			4309768		

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If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.