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(54) **ION FOCUSING DEVICE**

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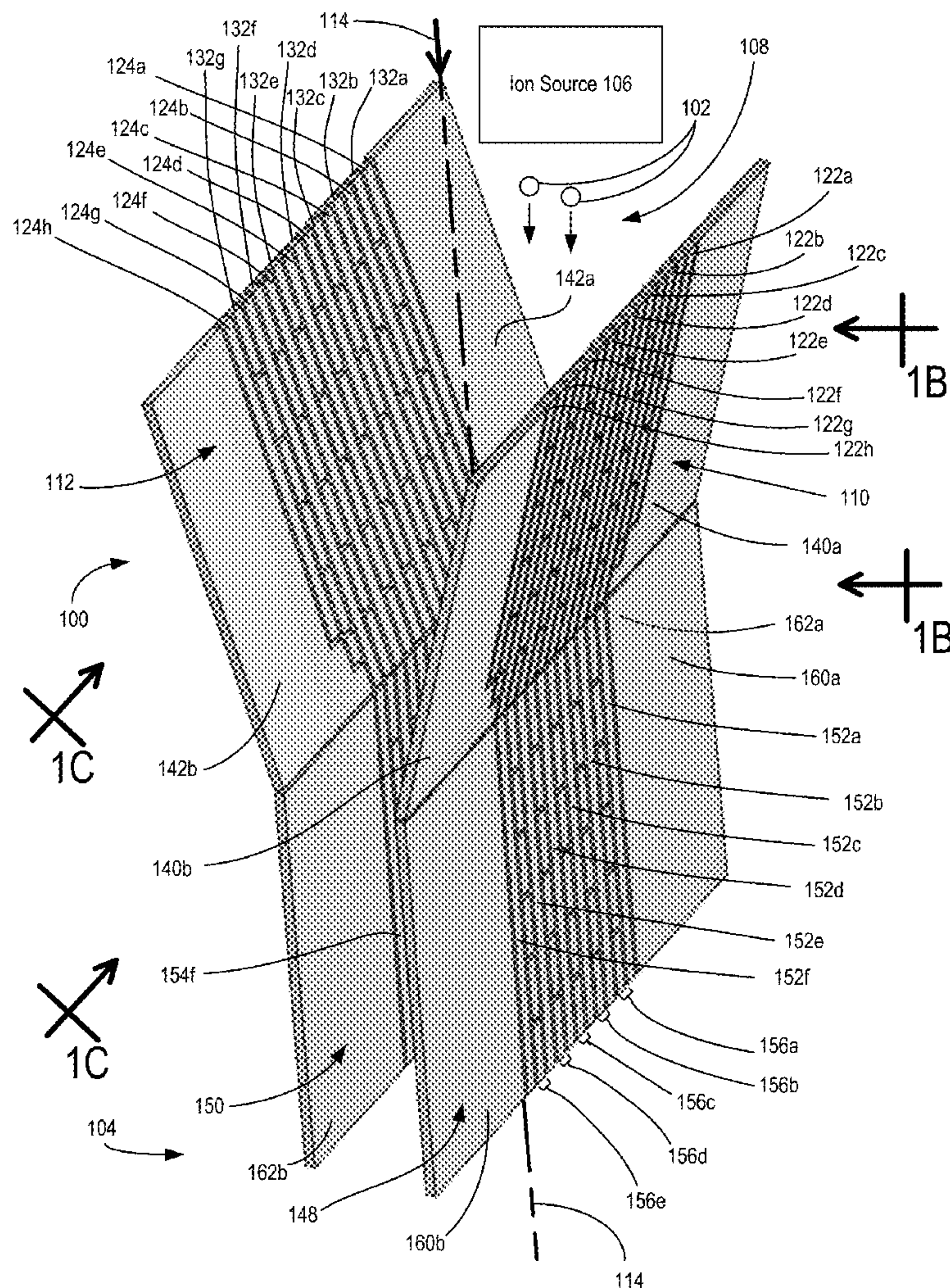
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ABSTRACT

Apparatus include a plurality of electrode arrangements spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis and defining an ion transfer channel that extends along the ion propagation axis that tapers between an input end that is situated to receive ions and an output end that is situated to couple the received ions to an input end of an ion guide. Methods include positioning a plurality of electrode arrangements at oblique angles opposite an ion propagation axis so as to form a ion transfer channel that tapers between an input end and an output end, and coupling the output end of the ion transfer channel to an input end of an ion optical element so as to direct ions in the ion transfer channel into the ion optical element. Related systems are also disclosed.



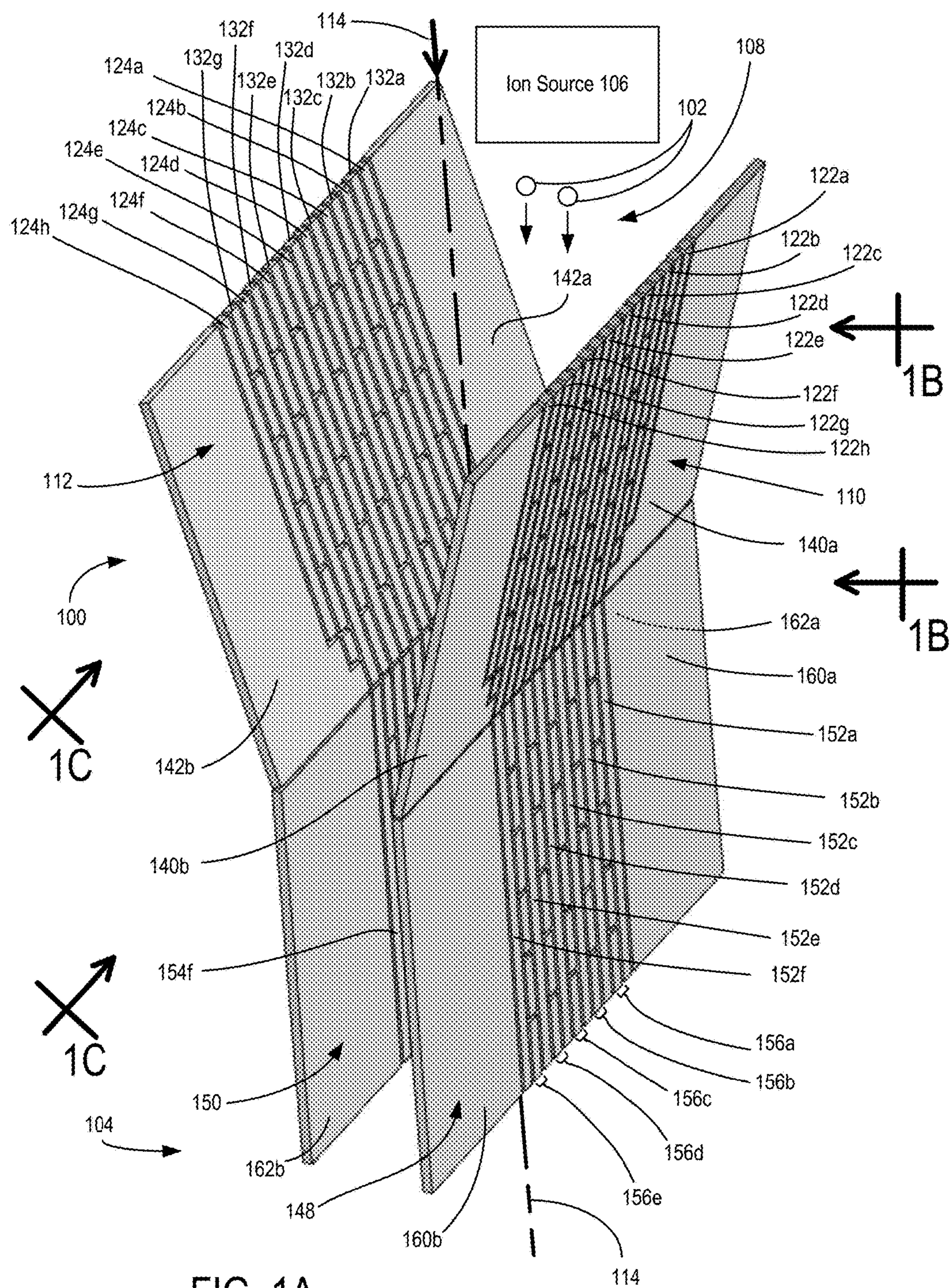


FIG. 1A

FIG. 1B

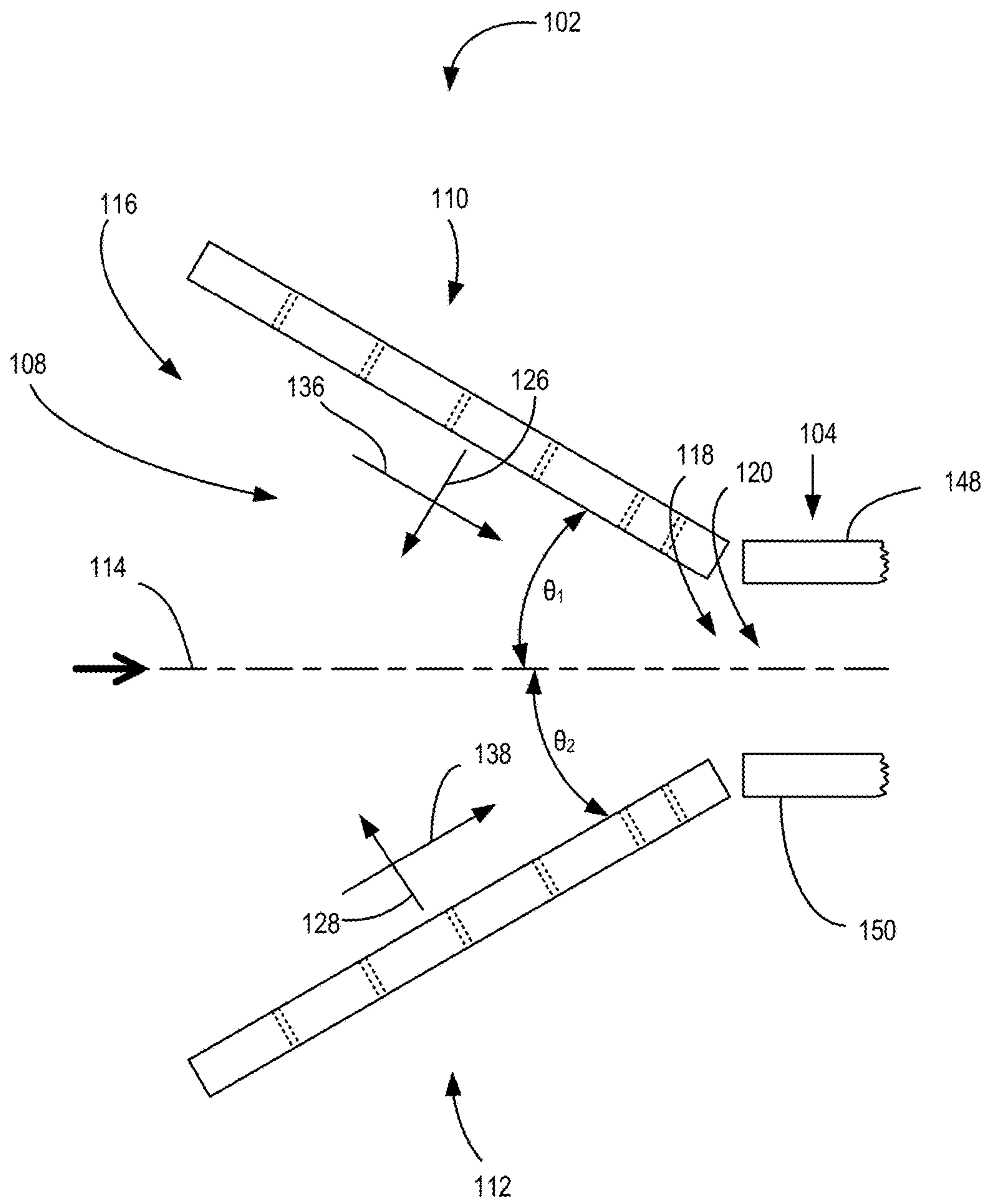


FIG. 1C

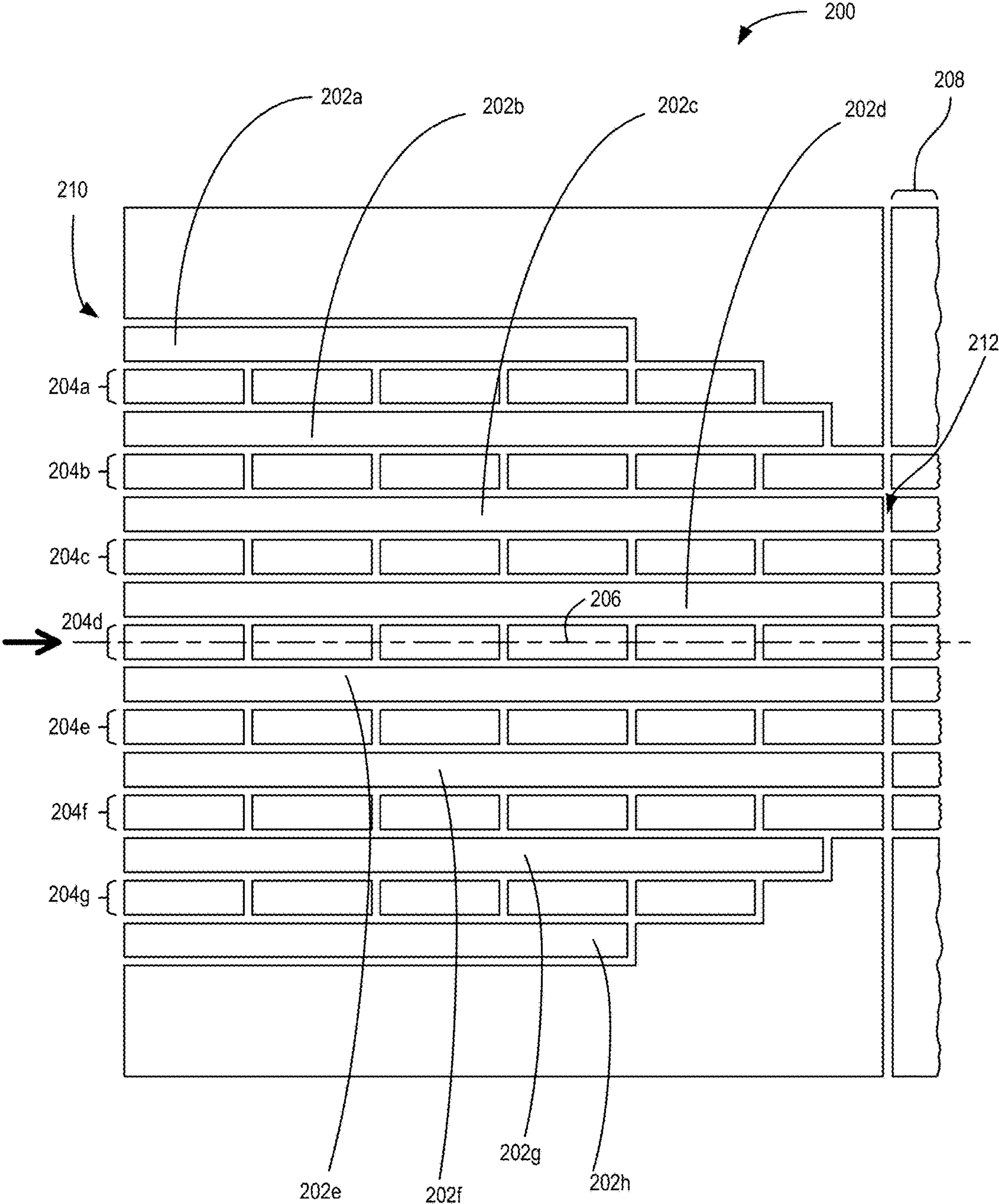


FIG. 2

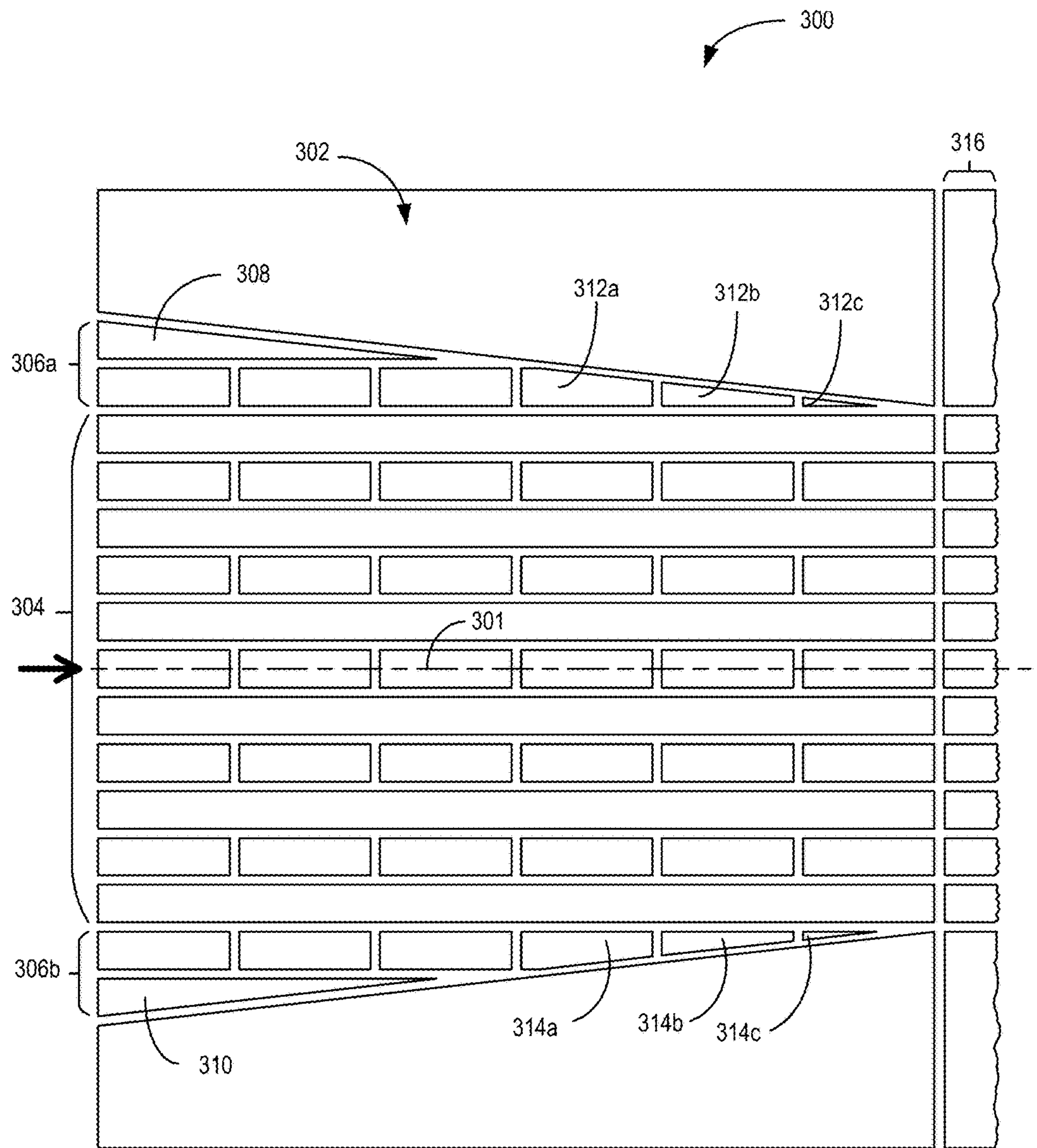


FIG. 3

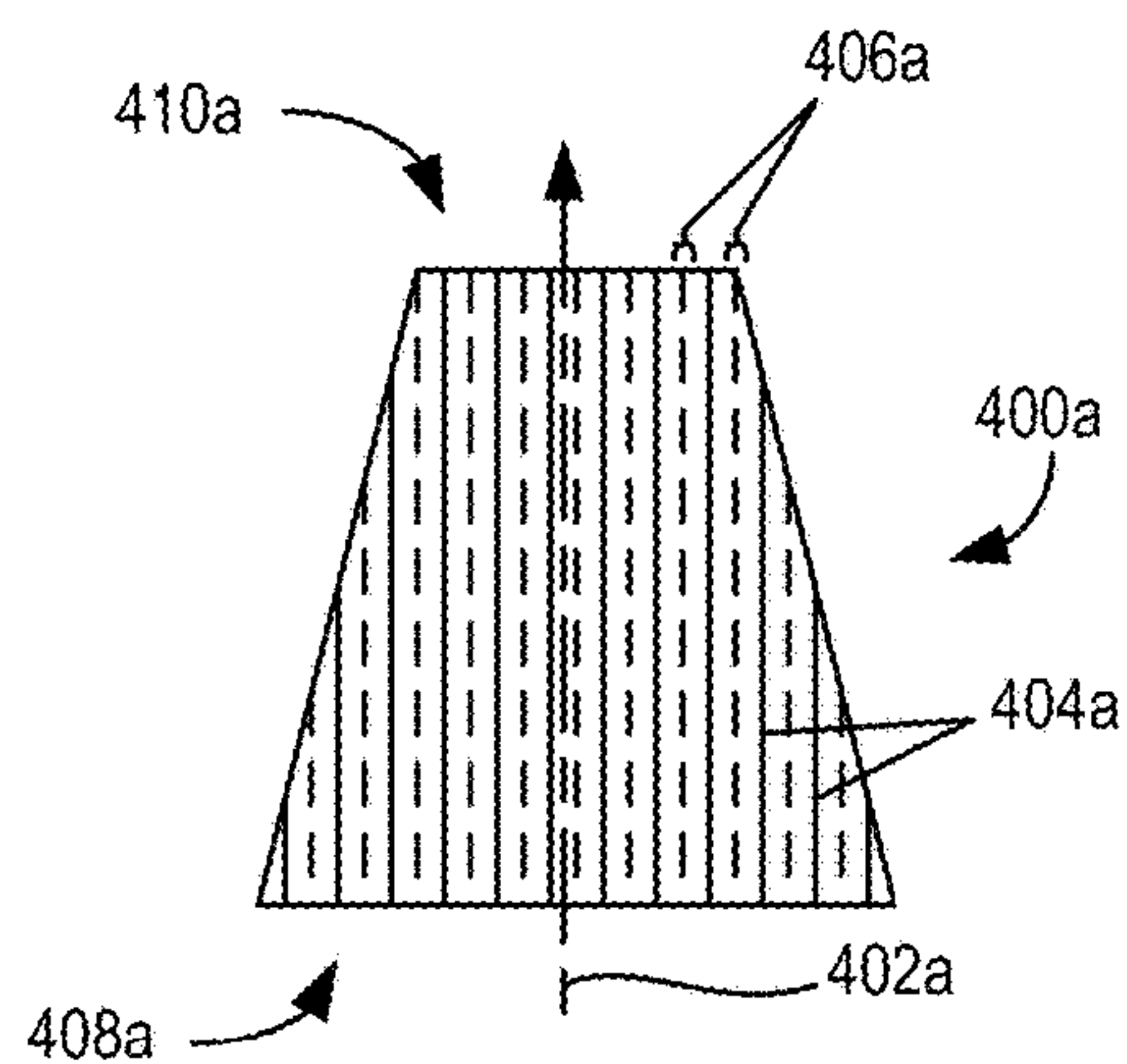


FIG. 4A

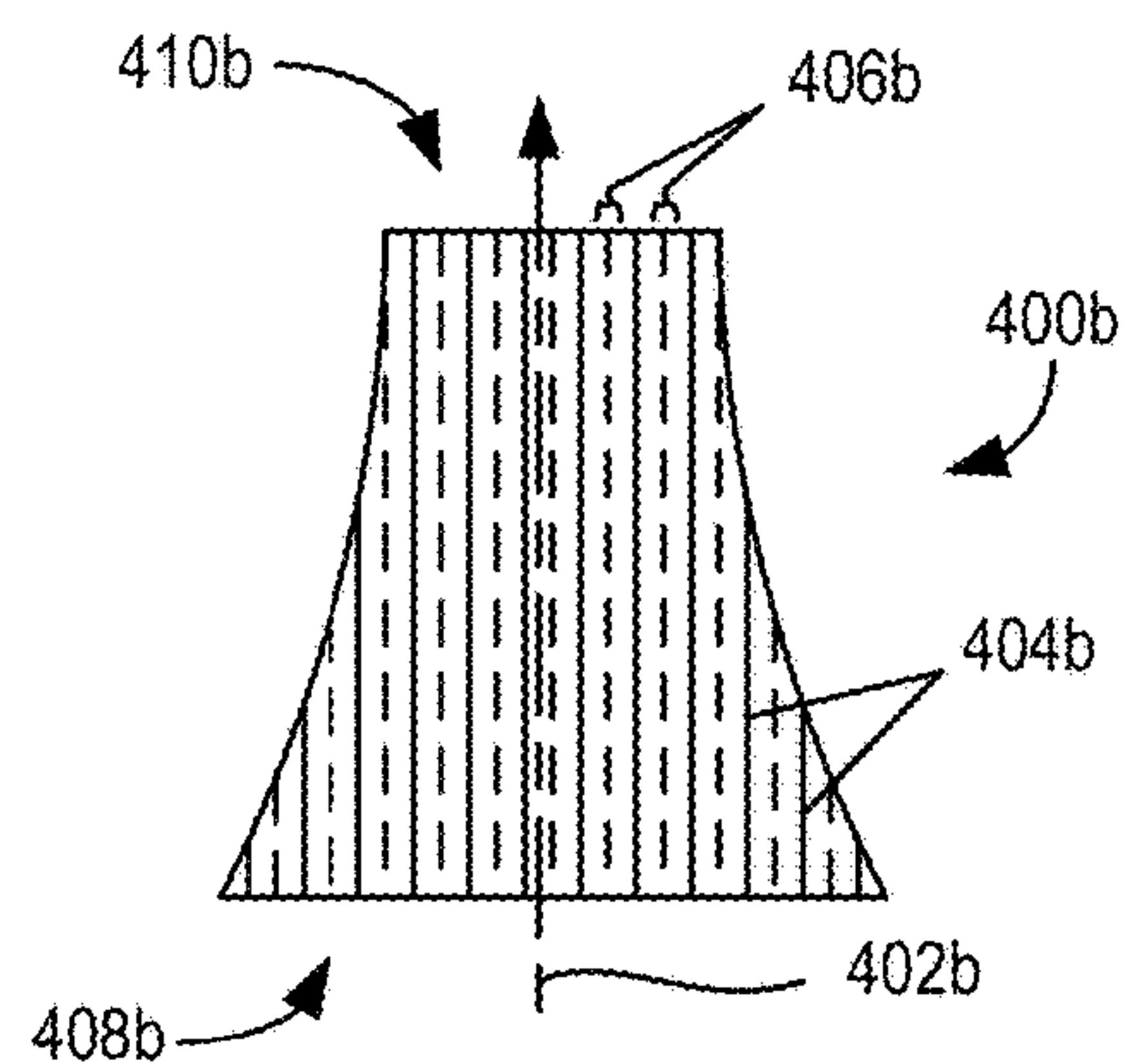


FIG. 4B

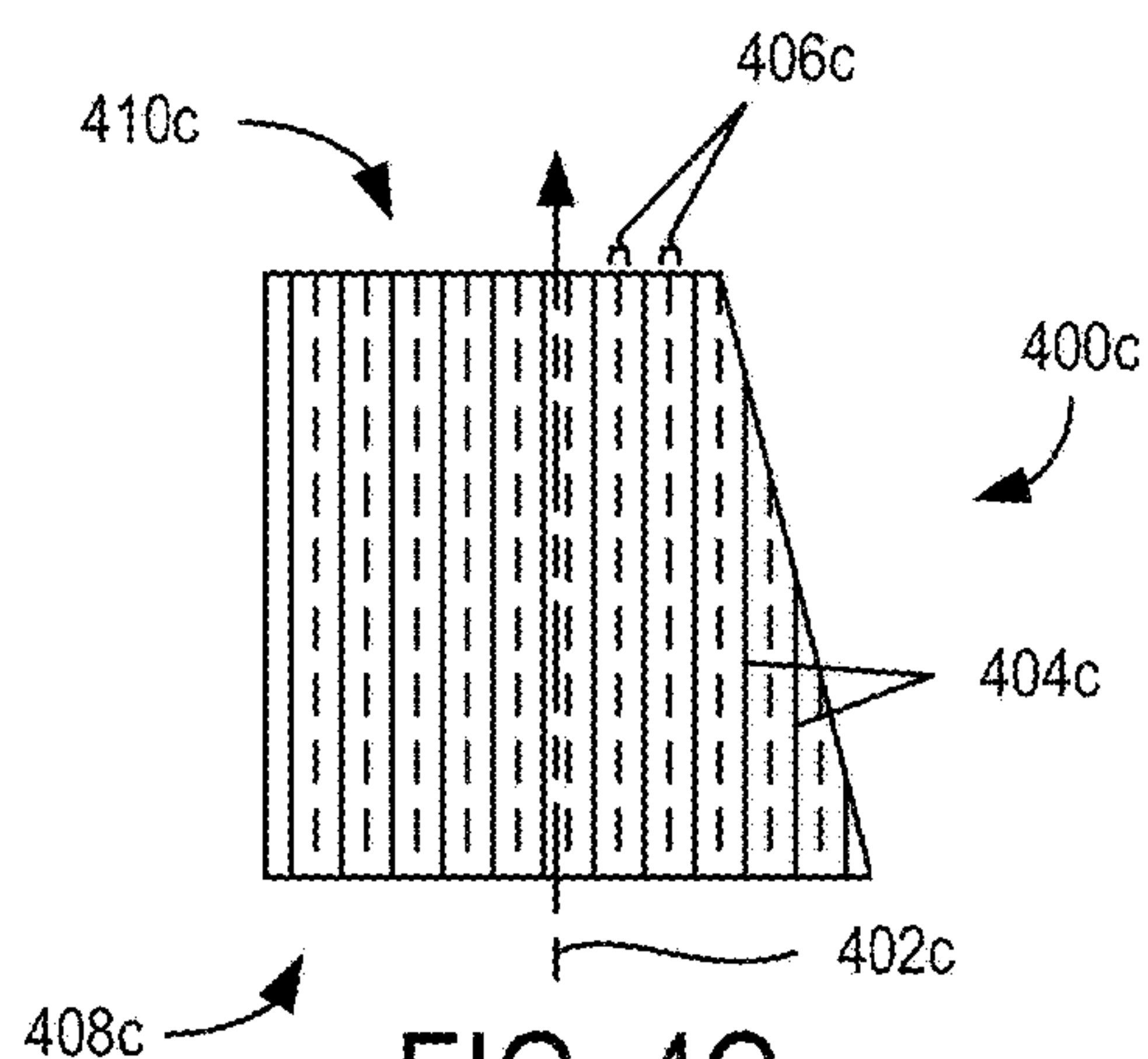


FIG. 4C

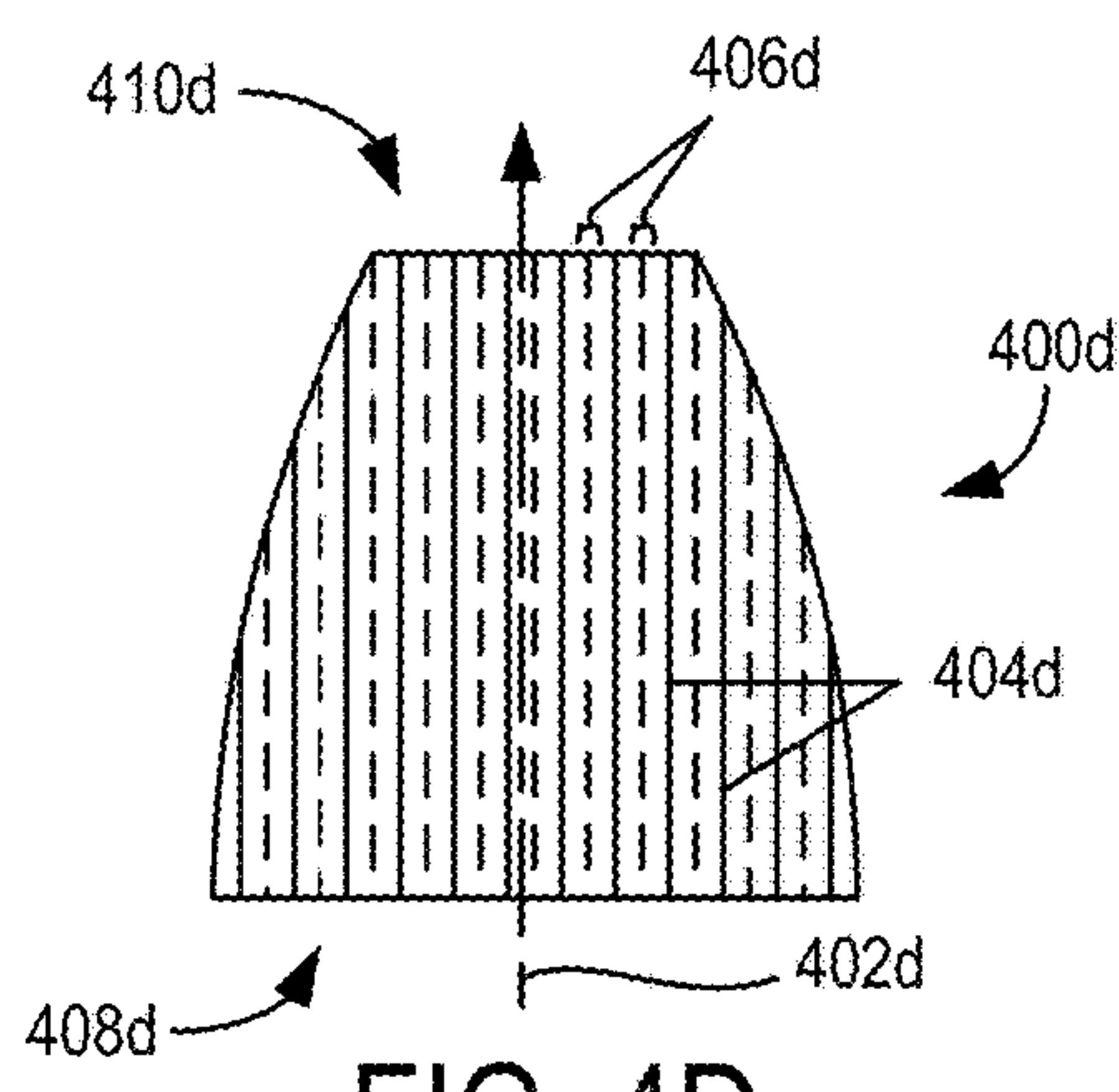


FIG. 4D

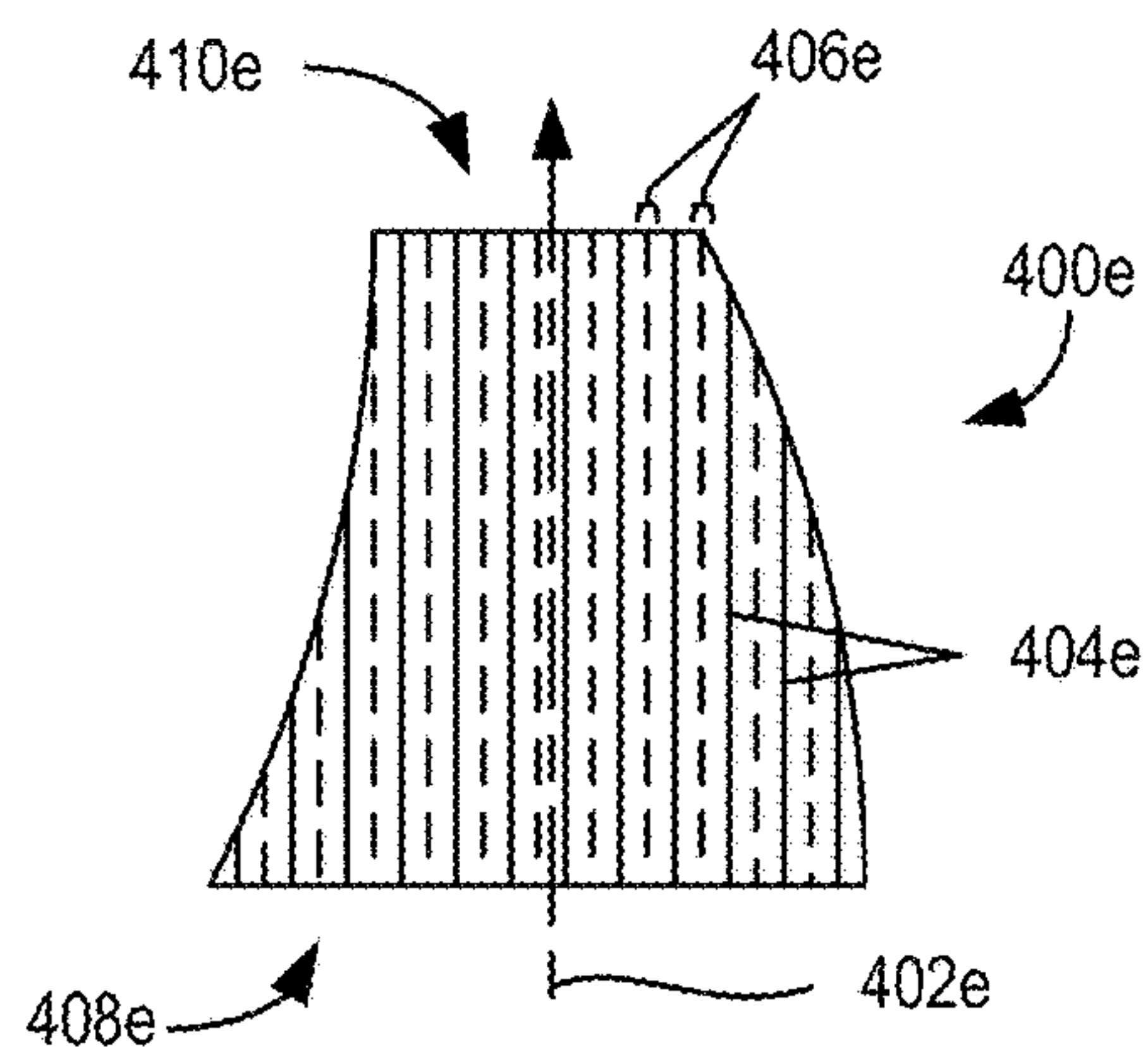


FIG. 4E

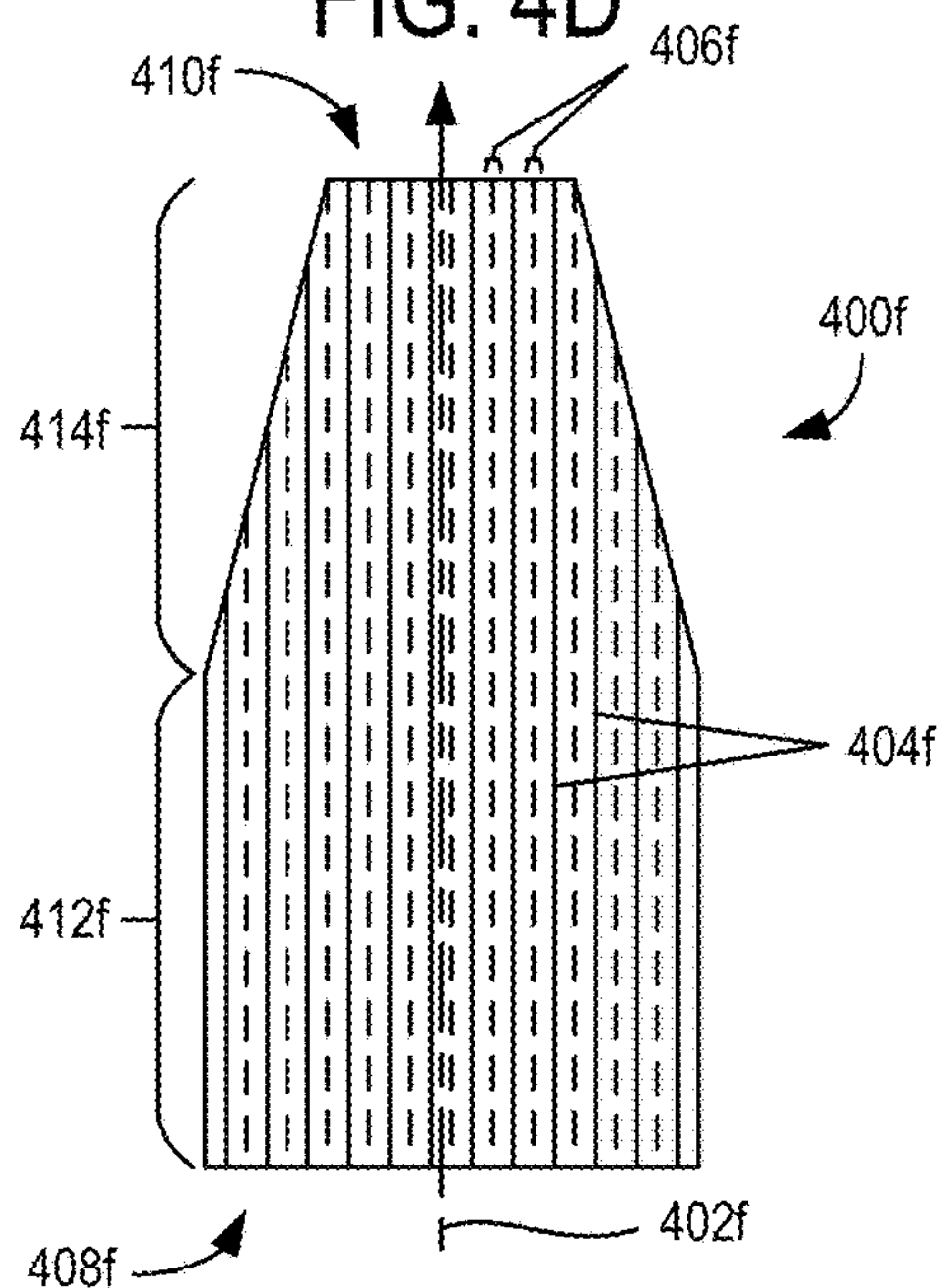
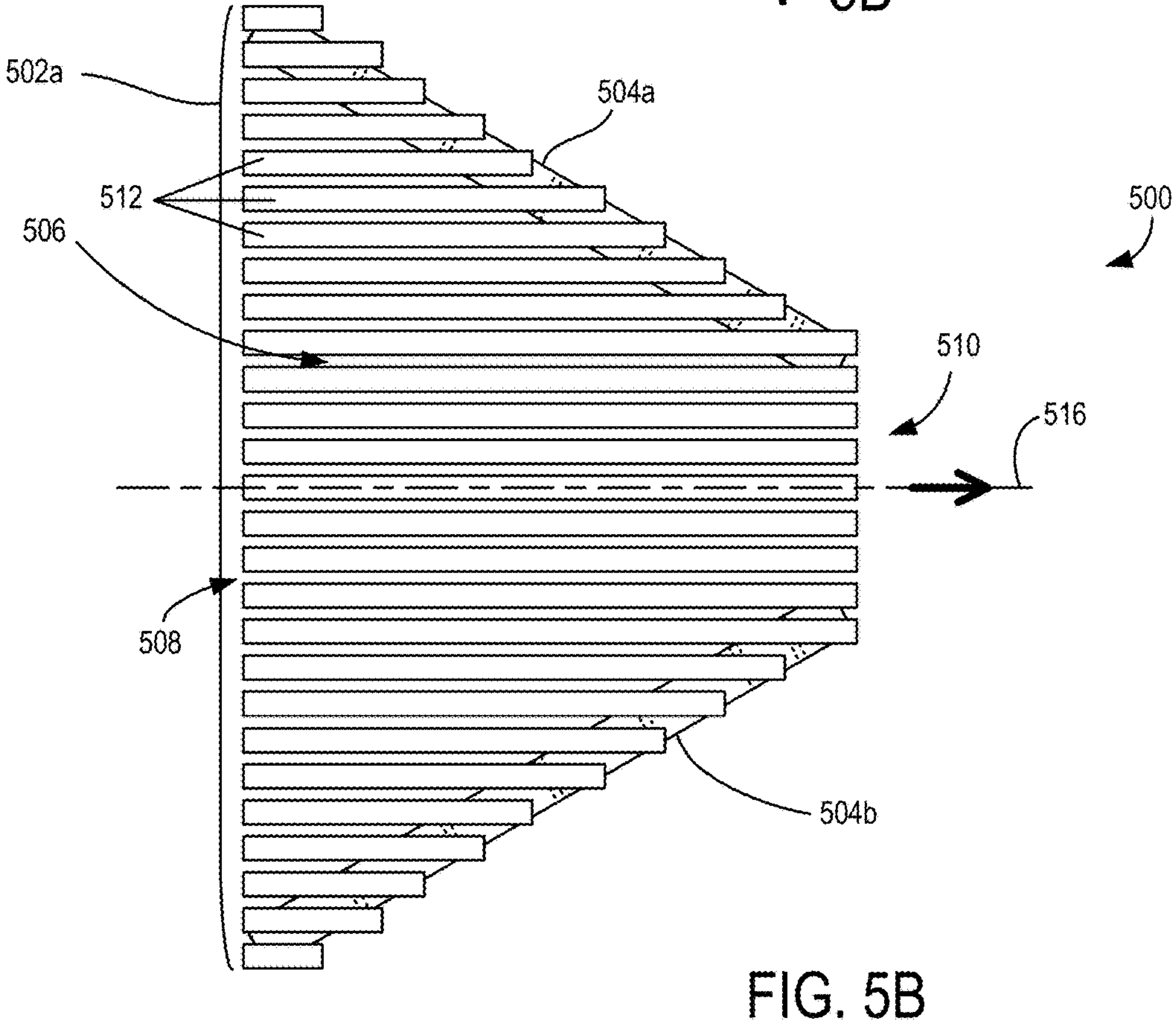
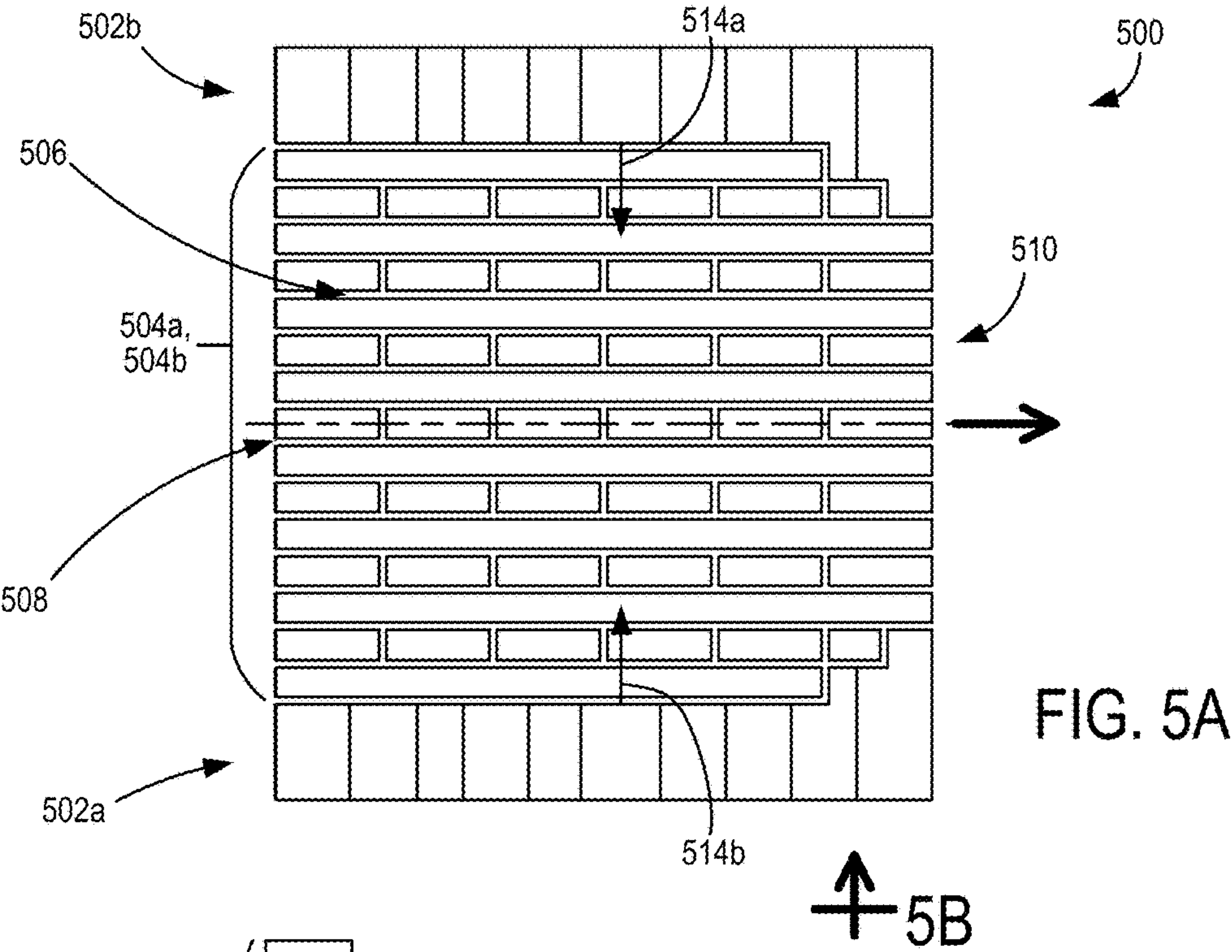


FIG. 4F



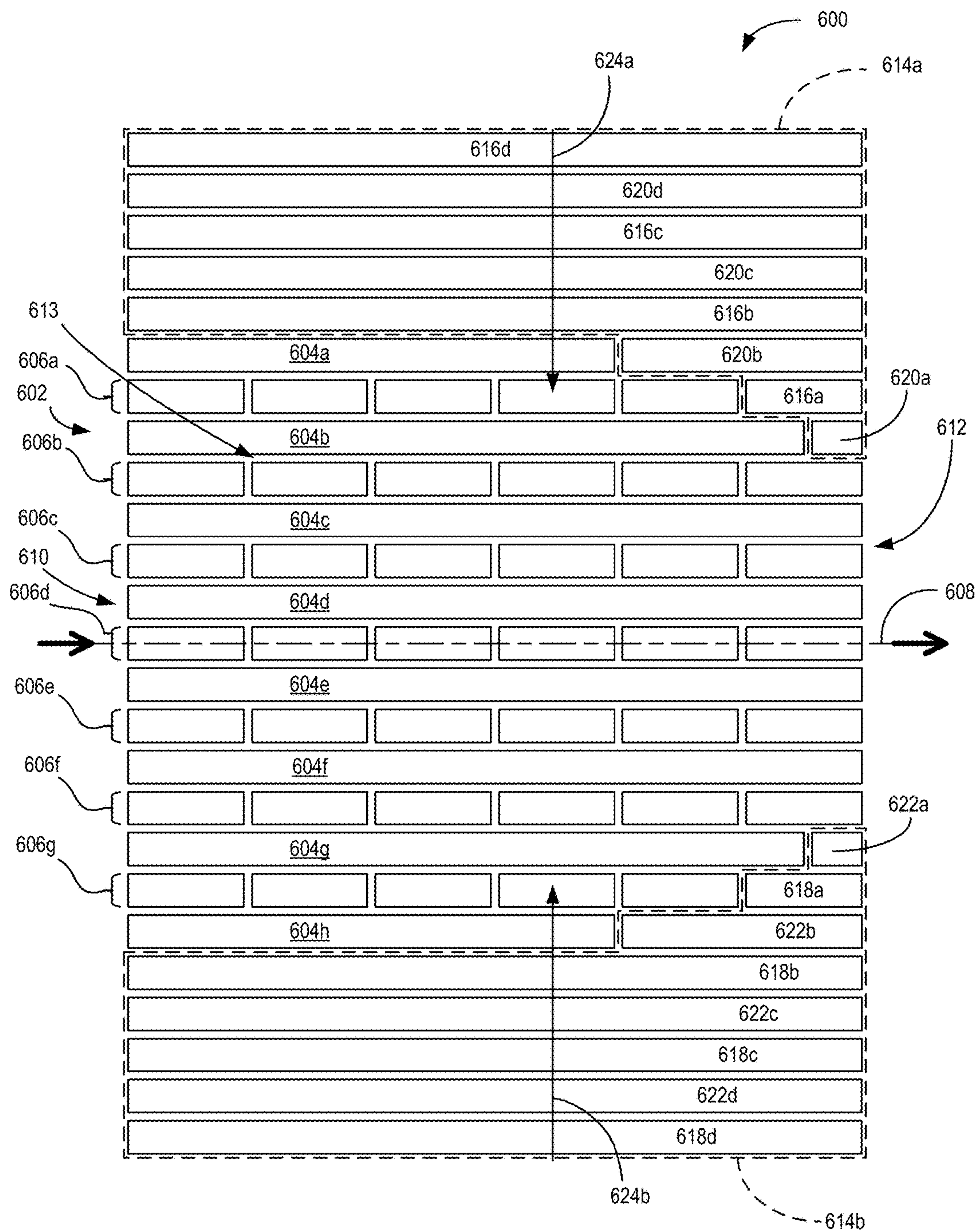


FIG. 6

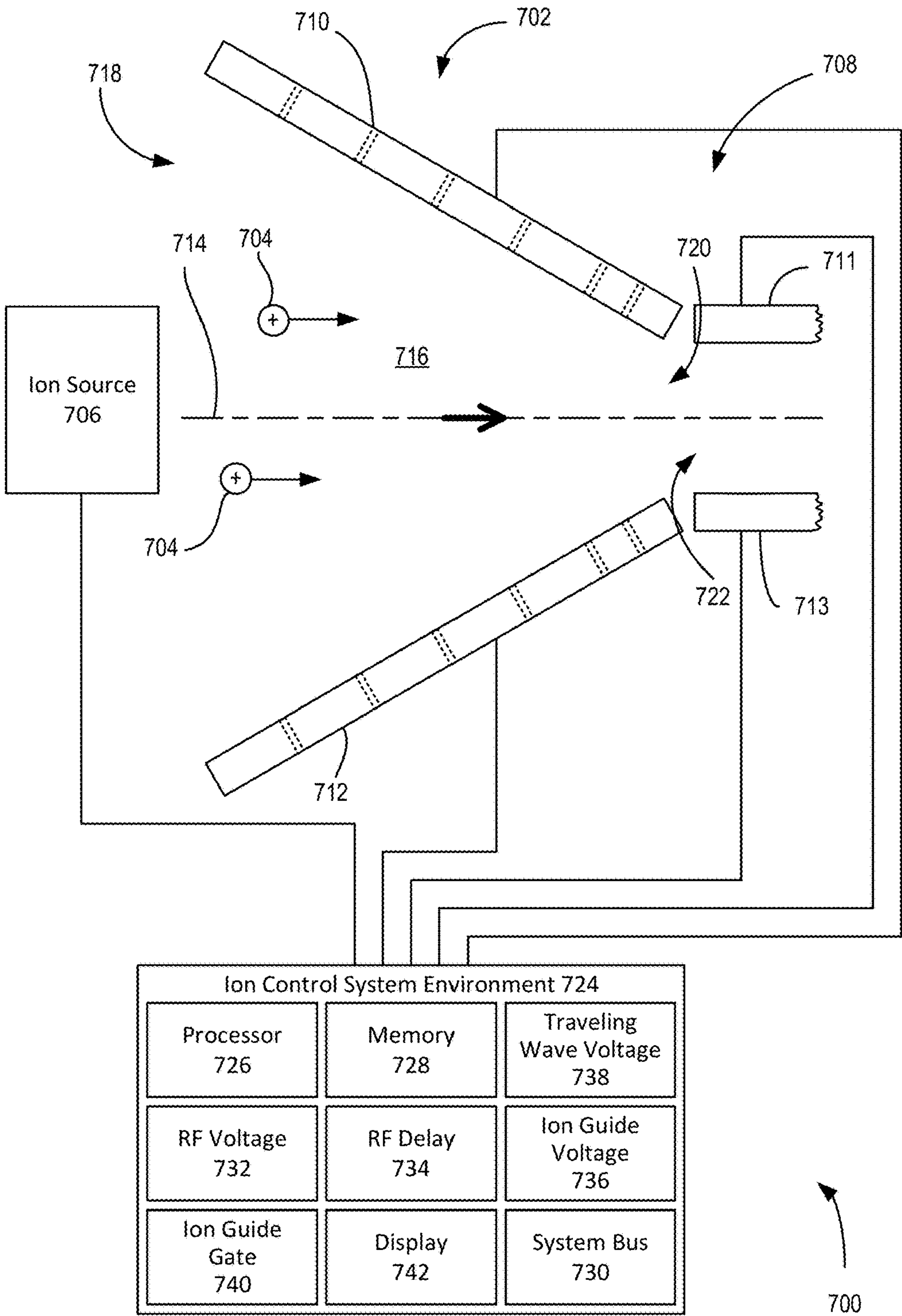


FIG. 7

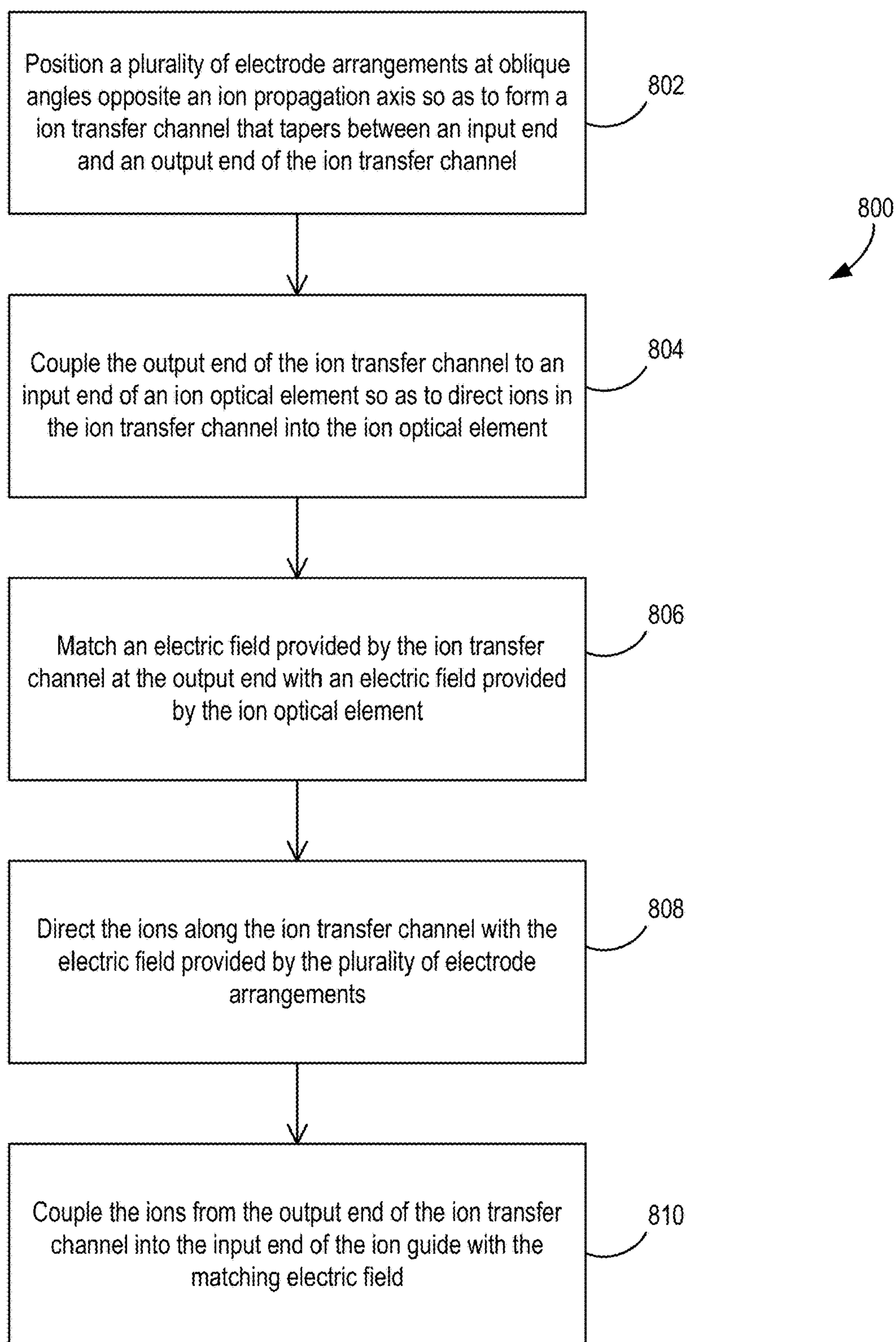


FIG. 8

ION FOCUSING DEVICE**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF GOVERNMENT
SUPPORT**

[0001] This invention was made with government support under DE-AC05-76RL01830 awarded by the United States Department of Energy. The government has certain rights in the invention.

FIELD

[0002] The field is ion focusing devices.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Ion manipulation has allowed the discovery of new applications related to material synthesis and analysis, and has fostered the creation of increasingly useful tools and instruments related to, for example, mass spectrometry. However, problems associated with directing and transferring ions have remained.

SUMMARY

[0004] Methods and apparatus for directing and transferring ions are disclosed. According to an aspect of the disclosed technology, apparatus include a plurality of electrode arrangements spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis and defining an ion transfer channel that extends along the ion propagation axis that tapers between an input end that is situated to receive ions and an output end that is situated to couple the received ions to an input end of an ion guide. In some examples, the received ions are coupled at the output end to the input end of the ion guide with an electric field that is matched to the input end of the ion guide. In representative examples, the electrode arrangements are arranged in respective electrode arrangement planes, each extending at a respective oblique angle with respect to the ion propagation axis. In some examples, each of the respective oblique angles is less than or equal 60 degrees and greater than or equal 5 degrees. In further examples, at least one of the electrode arrangements includes a plurality of RF electrodes extending in the direction of the ion propagation axis in the plane of the at least one electrode arrangement so that RF electrodes are situated to direct the ions away from the at least one electrode arrangement, wherein the at least one electrode arrangement includes a plurality of traveling wave electrode sets interspersed between the RF electrodes and extending in the direction of the ion propagation axis in the plane of the at least one electrode arrangement so that the traveling wave electrode sets are situated to direct the ions towards the output end of the ion transfer channel. In some examples, the at least one electrode arrangement is tapered such that there are fewer RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets at the output end of the ion transfer channel than at the input end of the ion transfer channel. In further examples, at least one of the electrodes at the input end that is not at the output end is non-rectangular based on an angle defined by the tapering of the at least one electrode arrangement. According to some embodiments, guard electrodes are situated opposite the plurality of RF electrodes and plurality of traveling wave electrode sets of the at least one electrode arrangement so as to direct the ions away from the pair of guard electrodes and into the ion transfer channel between the guard electrodes. In some examples, the guard electrodes comprise an oppos-

ing pair of DC electrodes, an opposing pair of RF electrode stacks, or an opposing pair of traveling wave electrode sets. In further examples, each of the traveling wave electrode sets includes a plurality of traveling wave electrodes situated to receive a traveling wave voltage that varies over time so as to direct the ions along toward the output end of the ion transfer channel. In additional examples, the RF electrodes and traveling wave electrodes at the output end of the ion transfer channel are matched in size, shape, RF voltage signal, or traveling wave voltage signal of respective electrodes at the input end of the ion guide. According to some embodiments, the ions directed by the apparatus have the same or different polarities.

[0005] According to another aspect of the disclosed technology, methods include positioning a plurality of electrode arrangements at oblique angles opposite an ion propagation axis so as to form an ion transfer channel that tapers between an input end and an output end, and coupling the output end of the ion transfer channel to an input end of an ion optical element so as to direct ions in the ion transfer channel into the ion optical element. In some embodiments, the coupling includes matching an electric field provided by the ion transfer channel at the output end with an electric field provided by the ion optical element. In further embodiments, ions are generated with an ion source and the ions are collected in the ion transfer channel. In additional examples, methods include directing the ions in the ion transfer channel to the output end with an electric field provided by the plurality of electrode arrangements. In further examples, methods include directing the ions at the output end into the input end of the ion optical element with the matching electric field. In some examples, at least one of the electrode arrangements includes a plurality of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets arranged in a plane and the arrangement is tapered in the plane such that there are fewer RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets at the output end of the ion transfer channel than at the input end of the ion transfer channel. In further examples, the electrode arrangements include guard electrodes situated opposite a plurality of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets so as to direct the ions away from the pair of guard electrodes and into the ion transfer channel between the guard electrodes, and wherein the guard electrodes include an opposing pair of DC electrodes, an opposing pair of RF electrode stacks, or an opposing pair of traveling wave electrode sets.

[0006] According to a further aspect of the disclosed technology, systems include at least one processor, and one or more computer-readable storage media including stored instructions that, responsive to execution by the at least one processor, cause the system to control electric potentials of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrodes in a plurality of electrode arrangements spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis and defining an ion transfer channel that extends along the ion propagation axis that tapers between an input end that is situated to receive ions and an output end that is situated to couple the received ions to an input end of an ion guide so that the ions are directed into the ion guide.

[0007] The foregoing and other objects, features, and advantages of the disclosed technology will become more apparent from the following detailed description, which proceeds with reference to the accompanying figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- [0008] FIG. 1A is a top view of an example ion focusing device.
- [0009] FIG. 1B is a side view of the example ion focusing device shown in FIG. 1A.
- [0010] FIG. 1C is a perspective view of the example ion focusing device shown in FIGS. 1A-1B.
- [0011] FIG. 2 is a top view of an example ion focusing device.
- [0012] FIG. 3 is a top view of another example ion focusing device.
- [0013] FIGS. 4A-4F are top view schematics of different examples of electrode arrangements.
- [0014] FIGS. 5A-5B are respective top and side views of another example of an ion focusing device.
- [0015] FIG. 6 is a top view of another example ion focusing device.
- [0016] FIG. 7 is a schematic of an ion manipulation system.
- [0017] FIG. 8 is a flowchart of an example method of directing ions.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0018] As used in this application and in the claims, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include the plural forms unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Additionally, the term “includes” means “comprises.” Further, the term “coupled” does not exclude the presence of intermediate elements between the coupled items.

[0019] The systems, apparatus, and methods described herein should not be construed as limiting in any way. Instead, the present disclosure is directed toward all novel and non-obvious features and aspects of the various disclosed embodiments, alone and in various combinations and sub-combinations with one another. The disclosed systems, methods, and apparatus are not limited to any specific aspect or feature or combinations thereof, nor do the disclosed systems, methods, and apparatus require that any one or more specific advantages be present or problems be solved. Any theories of operation are to facilitate explanation, but the disclosed systems, methods, and apparatus are not limited to such theories of operation.

[0020] Although the operations of some of the disclosed methods are described in a particular, sequential order for convenient presentation, it should be understood that this manner of description encompasses rearrangement, unless a particular ordering is required by specific language set forth below. For example, operations described sequentially may in some cases be rearranged or performed concurrently. Moreover, for the sake of simplicity, the attached figures may not show the various ways in which the disclosed systems, methods, and apparatus can be used in conjunction with other systems, methods, and apparatus. Additionally, the description sometimes uses terms like “produce” and “provide” to describe the disclosed methods. These terms are high-level abstractions of the actual operations that are performed. The actual operations that correspond to these terms will vary depending on the particular implementation and are readily discernible by one of ordinary skill in the art.

[0021] In some examples, values, procedures, or apparatus are referred to as “lowest,” “best,” “minimum,” or the like. It will be appreciated that such descriptions are intended to indicate that a selection among many used functional alter-

natives can be made, and such selections need not be better, smaller, or otherwise preferable to other selections.

[0022] Some examples are described in relation to one more longitudinal and lateral directions generalized to correspond to ion movement or confinement. Directions typically apply to ion movement, trapping, and confinement and are provided by electric fields produced by one or more electrodes that are arranged to define one or more volumes or channels of various shapes, sizes, and configurations. A direction can correspond to a single path, multiple paths, bi-directional movement, inward movement, outward movement, or a range of movements. Actual ion movement paths vary and can depend on the various characteristics of the electrode arrangements and electric fields produced by the corresponding electrodes and the positional, polarity, kinetic, or other characteristics of the ions received in a confinement volume. Directions referred to herein are generalized and actual specific particle movements typically correspond to electric fields produced and the electrical mobilities of the ions propagating in relation to the electric fields.

[0023] The disclosed technology is directed to devices, apparatus, and methods of manipulating ions, including the use of electric fields to create field-defined channels to direct ions with minimal or no losses. In some examples, ion confining fields are provided by unbiased radio frequency (RF) electric fields. In additional examples, ion confining fields provided by unbiased RF fields and traveling wave electric fields. In representative examples, ions of opposite polarity are moved, trapped, or manipulated using RF electric fields or RF and traveling wave electric fields. RF electric fields are typically applied so that RF fields generated by adjacent RF electrodes are out of phase, typically by approximately 180°, to form an alternating RF field arrangement that inhibits the ions from approaching the electrodes and that provides confinement. Confinement can be provided over a range of pressures (e.g., less than approximately 0.001 torr to approximately 1000 torr), and over a useful, broad, and adjustable mass to charge (m/z) range associated with the ions. In some examples ions are manipulated for analysis through mass spectrometry or with a mass spectrometer, and where pressures of less than approximately 0.1 torr to approximately 50 torr can be used to readily manipulate ions over a useful m/z range, e.g., m/z 20 to greater than approximately 5,000. In some examples, ion confinement volumes includes gases or reactants. Arrangements of RE electrodes and traveling wave electrodes receive corresponding potentials that allow creation of ion channels in the volume or gap between the electrode arrangements with a broad acceptance aperture so that lossless or substantially lossless coupling of ions to a narrower aperture can be achieved. Collection and coupling can include losses of less than 0.1%, 1%, or 5% of ions injected into a downstream ion optical component (such as an ion guide).

[0024] Traveling waves are typically created by dynamically applying DC potentials to a plurality of electrodes arranged in one or more sequences. Traveling wave electrode sets can be formed by one or more sequences of traveling wave electrodes situated in series. As the DC potentials are varied between adjacent electrodes of a traveling wave electrode sequence, a traveling wave can be formed with a speed based on the time dependent variation of the DC potentials. Varying traveling wave characteristics

can affect and manipulate various movements of ions having different ion mobilities, including producing ion confinement, lossless transport, and ion separation. In representative examples, traveling waves are used to losslessly direct ions along an ion channel, from a larger aperture to a narrower aperture. One traveling wave characteristic is the traveling wave speed, with ions that have higher mobility moving or surfing with the traveling wave and ions that have lower mobility rolling over and lagging behind the traveling wave to allow ion separation. Traveling wave speed can be varied so as to produce movement and separation, and to gate groups of ions that are directed into subsequent ion manipulation components. Another traveling wave characteristic is traveling wave amplitude, which can transport ions with lower ion mobilities with a corresponding increase in traveling wave amplitude. Traveling wave amplitudes are typically selected based on ion mobility characteristics and the desired ion manipulation to be in the range of greater than 0 V up to 30 V, 50 V, 80 V, 100 V, or greater. Traveling wave speeds are typically selected based on ion mobility characteristics and the desired ion manipulation to be in the range of less than 5 m/s, 20 m/s, 50 m/s, 100 m/s, 200 m/s, or 500 m/s. Traveling wave frequencies are typically selected between 10 kHz and 200 kHz.

[0025] FIGS. 1A-1C show an example ion focusing device **100** situated to receive ions **102** having various characteristics (mass, polarity, velocity, etc.) and to direct the ions into an ion optical element, such as an ion guide **104**. In representative examples, the ions **102** are collected from an ion source **106** and ion losses are reduced so as to provide efficient ion transfer to the ion guide **104**. The ion focusing device **100** collects and transfers the ions **102** to the ion guide **104** with a tapered ion transfer channel **108** that is defined by a pair of electrode arrangements **110**, **112** spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis **114**. The tapering of the ion transfer channel **108** provides a large aperture at an input end **116** to efficiently collect the ions **102** having various trajectories, and a smaller aperture at an output end **118** to couple the ions **102** into an input aperture **120** of the ion guide **104**. The tapering can define respective oblique angles θ_1 , θ_2 (or effective angles if the electrode arrangements are not planar) between the respective electrode arrangements **110**, **112** and the ion propagation axis **114**. In typical examples, θ_1 is equal to θ_2 though non-equal angles are possible. As shown, angles θ_1 , θ_2 are at 30 degrees with respect to the ion propagation axis **114**. In further examples, θ_1 , θ_2 are at 5 degrees, 15 degrees, 45 degrees, 60 degrees, or other angles. In representative embodiments, an electric field produced by the electrode arrangements **110**, **112** at the output end **118** is synchronized or smoothly matched to an electric field produced by the ion guide **104** at the ion guide input aperture **120**. In some examples, the ions **102** can have the same polarities or different polarities. Representative examples of the ion focusing device **100** can substantially relieve engineering constraints associated with precise alignment of ion optics, such as between planar ion guides and ion sources, and therefore can substantially reduce the cost of building ion manipulation platforms.

[0026] In some examples, the opposing electrode arrangements **110**, **112** are planar and include respective pluralities of radio frequency (RF) electrodes **122a-122h**, **124a-124h** that extend in the direction of the ion propagation axis **114**, e.g., along the planes of the respective electrode arrangements **110**, **112** from the input end **116** towards the output

end **118**. Adjacent electrodes of the RF electrodes **122a-122h**, **124a-124h** are typically driven out of phase with respect to each other (e.g., **122a**, **122c** driven in-phase and **122b** driven out of phase) so that the ions **102** propagating in the ion transfer channel **108** are directed away from the respective electrode arrangement **110**, **112**, e.g., as shown with arrows **126**, **128**. The opposing electrode arrangements **110**, **112** can also include respective pluralities of sets of traveling wave electrodes **130a-130g**, **132a-132g** that also extend in the direction of the ion propagation axis **114**. Each of the sets of traveling electrodes **130a-130g**, **132a-132g** includes respective pluralities of traveling wave electrodes **134** that can be driven at time varying DC voltages and synchronized in the respective plurality so that a traveling wave is formed in the direction of the ion propagation axis **114**. The traveling wave electric fields can direct the ions **102** along the ion transfer channel **108** from the input end **116** to the output end **118**, e.g., as shown with arrows **136**, **138**. The sets of traveling wave electrodes **130a-130g**, **132a-132g** are typically alternately interspersed between the RF electrodes **122a-122h**, **124a-124h**.

[0027] In representative embodiments, the opposing electrode arrangements **110**, **112** include an electrode tapering in the respective electrode planes. The electrode tapering can reduce the number of electrodes at the output end **118** that are presented to the input aperture **120** of the ion guide **104** as compared to the number of electrodes at the input end **106**. For example, the outer RF electrodes **122a**, **122h** can extend shorter lengths than the inner RF electrodes **122b-122g**, or can terminate before the output end **118**. Similarly, the outer RF electrodes **124a**, **124h** can extend reduced lengths or terminate before the output end **118**. Interspersed sets of traveling wave electrodes **130a**, **130g**, **132a**, **132g** can also extend less than the entire length from the input end **106** to the output end **118**. In some examples, the number of traveling wave electrodes **134** in the sets of traveling wave electrodes **130a**, **130g**, **132a**, **132g** can be the same as or smaller than the number of traveling wave electrodes **134** in the inner sets of traveling wave electrodes **130b-130f**, **132b-132f**. Various taper shapes or combinations of shapes can be formed and associated with reduced electrode or electrode set lengths, including one or more of trapezoidal, triangular, inward curving, outward curving, asymmetrical, rectangular, etc.

[0028] Opposing guard electrodes **140a**, **140b** are situated adjacent to, and in the plane of, the electrode arrangement **110**, and opposing guard electrodes **142a**, **142b** are situated adjacent to, and in the plane of, the electrode arrangement **112**. The guard electrodes **140a**, **140b**, **142a**, **142b** are typically biased with a DC voltage so as to direct the ions **102** away from the guard electrodes **140a**, **140b**, **142a**, **142b** so as to be situated between the opposing electrode arrangements **110**, **112** in the ion transfer channel **108**, e.g., in the directions indicated by arrows **144**, **146**. The guard electrodes **140a-140b**, **142a-142b** can be shaped to complement a tapered shape of the respective electrode arrangements **110**, **112**. In typical examples, the electrode arrangements **110**, **112** and the guard electrodes **140a**, **140b** can be formed on printed circuit board, using 3D printing, or other substrates suitable for ion manipulation. Electrode size and spacing can be varied based on electric field requirements for different ions, coupling efficiencies, and input parameters for ion optical elements (e.g., particle energy, density, timing, etc.). Electrode spacing typically provides a minimum

non-conductive area between electrodes to reduce the probability of electrical shorts or interference. In typical examples, minimum spacing and electrode size is on the order of millimeters, including as low as about 0.5 mm, though other dimensions are possible. Square and rectangular shapes can simplify construction and can define device features or boundaries (e.g., sides, apertures, etc.), some of which can be used to register against other ion guides or devices.

[0029] The input aperture 120 of the ion guide 104 or ion optical element is coupled or can be coupled to the output end 118 of the ion focusing device 100. In some embodiments, the ion focusing device 100 can be formed as an integral part of the ion guide 104, and in further embodiments, the ion focusing device 100 can be a separate device that can be coupled to various ion optical elements. In particular embodiments, the oblique angles θ_1 , θ_2 between the ion propagation axis 114 and the electrode arrangements 110, 112 can be varied with one or more hinges, translation stages, or other angle varying devices, including with the ion focusing device 100 situated separately or as attached or a part of the ion guide 104. In some examples, the ion guide 104 can include one or more electrode arrangements, such as opposing electrodes arrangements 148, 150, that match one or more characteristics of the respective electrode arrangements 110, 112 so as to smoothly couple the ions 102 from the ion transfer channel 108 to the ion guide 104. In one embodiment, the electrode arrangements 148, 150 include a plurality of RF electrodes 152a-152f, 154a-154f and traveling wave electrode sets 156a-156e, 158a-158e that are shaped and spaced at the input aperture 120 similarly to the RF electrodes 122b-122g, 124b-124g and the traveling wave electrode sets 130b-130f, 132b-132f at the output end 118. The electrodes 154a-154f, 158a-158e are shown parenthetically in FIG. 1B as hidden in the view below the electrodes 152a-152f, 156a-156e. In some examples, the electrode arrangements 148, 150 can respectively contact the electrode arrangements 110, 112 or can respectively continuously extend from the electrode arrangements 110, 112. In representative examples, the electrode arrangements 110, 112 are respectively spaced apart from the electrode arrangements 148, 150.

[0030] In some embodiments, an RF voltage signal applied to RF electrodes 122b-122g, 124b-124g of the electrode arrangements 110, 112 can be synchronized or applied similarly to RF electrodes 152a-152f, 154a-154f of the electrode arrangements 148, 150. In further embodiments, a traveling wave voltage signal applied to traveling wave electrode sets 132b-132f, 134b-134f can be synchronized or applied similarly to traveling wave electrode sets 156a-156e, 158a-158e. Representative examples of the ion guide 104 also include DC guard electrodes 160a, 160b, 162a, 162b that are situated to direct the ions 102 received in the ion guide 104 away from lateral sides of the ion guide 104 and between the electrode arrangements 148, 150. In various examples, voltage signals applied to the electrode arrangements 148, 150 or to other electrodes (not shown) of the ion guide 104 adjacent to the electrode arrangements 148, 150 can be the same or different from the voltage signals applied to the electrode arrangements 110, 112 based on selected ion activity or application in the ion guide 104, such as ion filtering, ion separation, ion gating, mass spec-

trometry, time-of-flight control, ion beam cross-section variation (e.g., circular, non-circular, elliptical, symmetric, asymmetric, etc.) etc.

[0031] In FIG. 2, an ion focusing device 200 includes RF electrodes 202a-202h and traveling wave electrode sets 204a-204g that are situated parallel to each other and at an oblique angle (into the plane of FIG. 2) to an ion propagation axis 206. A set of similar electrodes oppositely situated about the ion propagation axis 206 at a similar oblique angle and that assists with directing collected ions to an ion optical element 208 is omitted for clarity. Outer RF electrodes 202a-202b, 202g-202h and traveling wave electrode sets 204a, 204g extend lengths shorter than inner RF electrodes 202c-202f and traveling wave electrode sets 204b-204f so as to define an electrode tapering between an input end 210 and an output end 212 of the ion focusing device 200. Opposing guard electrodes 214, 216 are also situated to direct ions away from the respective guard electrodes 214, 216 so that the ions are kept within the ion focusing device 200.

[0032] FIG. 3 is another example of an ion focusing device 300 having an ion propagation axis 301 and that includes an electrode arrangement 302 having a set 304 of inner RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets. The electrode arrangement 302 further includes opposite, tapered outer electrode sets 306a, 306b including respective non-rectangular RF electrodes 308, 310 and non-rectangular traveling wave electrodes 312a-312c, 314a-314c. The ion focusing device 300 can be situated to collect ions from an ion source and to direct the collected ions to an ion guide 316 situated downstream along the ion propagation axis 301.

[0033] FIGS. 4A-4F are different examples of tapered planar electrode arrangements 400a-400f that can be used with one or more other planar electrode arrangements situated at angles in relation to respective ion propagation axes 402a-402f to form respective tapered ion focusing channels. Each of the electrode arrangements 400a-400f can include a plurality of longitudinally extending RF electrodes 404a-404f and traveling wave electrode sets 406a-406f that extend various lengths. The RF electrodes 404a-404f generally maintain ions between the respective electrode arrangements 400a-400f and other electrode arrangements of the tapered ion focusing channels. The traveling wave sets 406a-406f are generally situated to move the ions in the ion focusing channels in the direction of the ion propagation axes 402a-402f. The electrode arrangement 400a is arranged in a trapezoidal configuration extending from a channel input 408a to a channel output 410a that can be coupled with subsequent ion manipulation elements. Sides of the electrode arrangement 400b curve inwardly between a channel input 408b and a channel output 410b. In the electrode arrangement 400c, one side of the electrode arrangement 400c is tapered between a channel input 408c and a channel output 410c, and an opposite side extends parallel to the RF electrodes 404c, the traveling wave electrode sets 406c. The electrode arrangement 400d is similar to the electrode arrangement 400b except that opposite tapered sides curve outward between a channel input 408d and a channel output 410d. The electrode arrangement 400e shows an asymmetric configuration that includes opposite tapered inward-curving and outward-curving sides extending between a channel input 408e and a channel output 410e. Various combinations of electrode arrangement geometries can be formed as well, and electrode arrangement 400f shows one such example with a rectangular electrode arrangement portion 412f

extending from a channel input **408f** a predetermined length and a trapezoidal electrode arrangement portion **414f** extending from an end of the rectangular electrode arrangement portion **412f** to a channel output **410f**.

[0034] FIGS. 5A-5B depict an example of an ion focusing device **500** that includes guard electrode sets **502a**, **502b** situated at opposite ends of opposing electrode arrangements **504a**, **504b** so as to define an ion focusing channel **506** between an input aperture **508** and an output aperture **510**. The guard electrodes **502a**, **502b** include respective pluralities of adjacent RF electrodes **512** forming stacked arrangements that are situated to direct ions into the ion focusing channel **506**, e.g., in the direction of arrows **514a**, **514b**. In typical examples, the alternate RF electrodes are biased out of phase so as to provide the directing of the ions into the interior of the ion focusing channel **506**. As shown in FIG. 5B, the RF electrodes **512** of the guard electrode set **502a** generally extend parallel to an ion propagation axis **516**. In typical examples, the RF electrodes of the guard electrode **502b** can also extend parallel to the ion propagation axis **516**. Also, as shown in FIG. 5B, the RF electrodes **512** can define an electrode tapering towards the output aperture **510**. In some examples, all or additional RF electrodes of the guard electrode sets **502a**, **502b** can extend equal lengths between the input aperture **508** and the output aperture **510**. In additional examples, the RF electrodes **512** of one or both of the guard electrode sets **502a**, **502b** are not parallel to each other. For example, one or more of the RF electrodes **512** can be parallel to planes defined by one of the opposing electrode arrangements **504a**, **504b** or at other angles.

[0035] In FIG. 6, an ion focusing device **600** is shown that includes a planar electrode arrangement **602** that includes RF electrodes **604a-604h** and longitudinal traveling wave sets **606a-606g** arranged similar to the arrangement RF electrodes **202a-202h** and traveling wave electrode sets **204a-204g** shown in FIG. 2. The ion focusing device **600** is generally situated to direct ions along an ion propagation axis **608** between an input aperture **610** and an output aperture **612**. The ion propagation axis **608** is generally arranged at an oblique angle (into the plane of FIG. 6) to the planar electrode arrangement **602**, and a similar opposing electrode arrangement (below the electrode arrangement **602** and not shown) can also be arranged at an angle with respect to the ion propagation axis so as to define a tapering of an ion propagation channel **613** defined between the electrode arrangement **602** and the opposing electrode arrangement between the input aperture **610** and output aperture **612**. Opposing guard electrodes **614a**, **614b** are also situated opposite the electrode arrangement **602** and include alternating RF electrodes **616a-616d**, **618a-618d** and interspersed traveling wave electrodes **620a-620d**, **622a-622d**. The RF electrodes **616a-616d**, **618a-618d** direct ions between the planar electrode arrangement **602** and the opposing electrode arrangement (e.g., into the plane of FIG. 6) so that the ions are kept in the ion propagation channel **613**. The traveling wave electrodes **620a-620d**, **622a-622d** are situated to direct the ions towards the ion propagation axis **608**, e.g., in the direction of arrows **624a**, **624b**, so that ions can also be directed according to a tapering of the electrodes in the plane of the planar electrode arrangement **602** towards the output aperture **612**.

[0036] FIG. 7 is a schematic of an ion collection system **700** that includes an ion focusing device **702** that is situated to collect ions **704** from an ion source **706** and to direct the

ions **704** into an ion optical element **708**. The ion focusing device **702** includes opposing electrode arrangements **710**, **712** situated at an angle with respect to an ion optical axis **714** and each situated with a plurality of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets to guide the ions **704** in an ion focus channel **716** from an input end **718** to an output end **720** to an input end **722** of the ion optical element **708**. The ion optical element **708** can include opposing electrode arrangements **711**, **713** that can be similar to or different from the opposing electrode arrangements **710**, **712**. A pair of guard electrodes (not shown) can also be situated to direct the ions **704** into the ion focus channel **716** or to prevent the ions **704** from leaving the ion focus channel **716** into or out of the plane of FIG. 7.

[0037] The ion collection system **700** also includes an ion control system environment **724** coupled to the ion focusing device **702**, ion source **706**, and ion optical element **708** that is operable to control ion collection and ion manipulation. The ion control system environment **724** include one or more computing devices that include at least a processor **726** and a memory **728**. Computing devices can include desktop or laptop computers, mobile devices, tablets, logic controllers, etc. The processor **726** can include one or more CPUs, GPUs, ASICs, PLCs, FPGAs, PLDs, CPLDs, etc., that can perform various data processing or I/O functions associated with the ion control system environment **724**. The memory **728** can be volatile or non-volatile (e.g., RAM, ROM, flash, hard drive, optical disk, etc.) and fixed or removable and is coupled to the processor **726**. The memory **728** can provide storage capacity for one or more computer-readable media. One or more system buses **730** can provide a communication path between various environment components. The ion control system environment **724** can also be situated in a distributed form so that applications and tasks are performed by remote processing devices that are linked through a communications network. In a distributed computing environment, program modules and logic can be located in both local and remote memory storage devices.

[0038] The ion control system environment **724** can include RF voltage control logic **732** that controls the electric potential applied to the RF electrodes of the electrode arrangements **710**, **712**. An RF phase delay **734** can be used for alternate adjacent RF electrodes in the electrode arrangements **710**, **712** so that a selected phase delay (e.g., 180 degrees) can be applied between adjacent RF electrodes. In some examples, the RF voltage control logic **732** can also control the electric potential applied to RF electrodes of the opposing RF electrode arrangements **711**, **713** and such applied voltage can be synchronized with a zero delay or non-zero delay with selected RF electrodes of the electrode arrangements **710**, **712**, such as those that are longitudinally matched at the output end **722** of the ion focusing device **702** and the input end of the ion optical element **708**. In further examples, the ion control system environment **724** can detect or receive an ion guide voltage **736** from the ion optical element **708** and apply an RF voltage to the RF electrodes of the electrode arrangements **710**, **712** based on RF voltage characteristics (e.g., phase, frequency, amplitude) of the ion guide voltage **736**. In additional examples, a traveling wave voltage control logic **738** can control traveling wave electric potentials that are applied to traveling wave electrodes of the electrode arrangements **710**, **712** so as to direct the ions **704** towards the output end **720**. In some embodiments, traveling wave electric potentials can

also be controlled for traveling wave electrode sets of electrode arrangements **711**, **713** in the ion optical element **708**. In some examples, traveling wave characteristics can be synchronized between the electrode arrangements **710**, **711** and electrode arrangements **712**, **713** so as to form a smooth or continuous traveling wave coupling between the ion focusing device **702** and the ion optical element **708**. In additional embodiments, the ion control system environment **724** can include an ion guide gate logic **740** that controls generation and/or emission of ions from the ion source **706**. The ion guide gate logic **740** can also be synchronized to the traveling wave voltage control logic **738** so as to queue or position the ions **704** in the ion focusing device **702** so that groups of the ions **704** are controllably released or directed into the input end **722** of the ion optical element **708**. In some examples, various voltage waveforms, ion characteristics, or other system parameters or performance outputs can be displayed on a display **742**.

[0039] FIG. 8 shows a method **800** for directing ions. At **802**, a plurality of typically planar electrode arrangements are positioned oppositely at oblique angles to an ion propagation axis so as to form an ion transfer channel that tapers between an input end and an output end of the ion transfer channel. The tapered ion transfer channel can be used to collect ions from an ion source and to transmit the ions, including losslessly in some examples, to an ion optical element. At **804**, the output end of the ion transfer channel is coupled to an input end of the ion optical element so that ions in the ion transfer channel can be directed through the ion transfer channel and into the ion optical element. In representative embodiments, at **806**, an electric field provided in the ion transfer channel by the electrode arrangements at the output end is matched to an electric field provided by the ion optical element at the input of the ion optical element.

[0040] Having described and illustrated the principles of the disclosed technology with reference to the illustrated embodiments, it will be recognized that the illustrated embodiments can be modified in arrangement and detail without departing from such principles. For instance, elements of the illustrated embodiments shown in software may be implemented in hardware and vice-versa. Also, the technologies from any example can be combined with the technologies described in any one or more of the other examples. It will be appreciated that procedures and functions such as those described with reference to the illustrated examples can be implemented in a single hardware or software module, or separate modules can be provided. The particular arrangements above are provided for convenient illustration, and other arrangements can be used.

[0041] In view of the many possible embodiments to which the principles of the disclosed technology may be applied, it should be recognized that the illustrated embodiments are only representative examples and should not be taken as limiting the scope of the disclosure. Alternatives specifically addressed in these sections are merely exemplary and do not constitute all possible alternatives to the embodiments described herein. For instance, various components of systems described herein may be combined in function and use. We therefore claim all that comes within the scope of the appended claims.

1. An apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of electrode arrangements spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis and defin-

ing an ion transfer channel that extends along the ion propagation axis that tapers between an input end that is situated to receive ions and an output end that is situated to couple the received ions to an input end of an ion guide;

wherein the electrode arrangements are arranged in respective electrode arrangement surfaces;

wherein at least one of the electrode arrangements includes a plurality of RF electrodes extending in the direction of the ion propagation axis in the surface of the at least one electrode arrangement so that RF electrodes are situated to direct the ions away from the at least one electrode arrangement;

wherein the at least one electrode arrangement includes a plurality of traveling wave electrode sets interspersed between the RF electrodes and extending in the direction of the ion propagation axis in the surface of the at least one electrode arrangement so that the traveling wave electrode sets are situated to direct the ions towards the output end of the ion transfer channel.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the received ions are coupled at the output end to the input end of the ion guide with an electric field that is matched to the input end of the ion guide.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the respective electrode arrangement surfaces are planes, each extending at a respective oblique angle with respect to the ion propagation axis.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein each of the respective oblique angles is less than or equal 60 degrees and greater than or equal 5 degrees.

5. (canceled)

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the at least one electrode arrangement is tapered such that there are fewer RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets at the output end of the ion transfer channel than at the input end of the ion transfer channel.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the electrodes at the input end that is not at the output end is non-rectangular based on an angle defined by the tapering of the at least one electrode arrangement.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising guard electrodes situated opposite the plurality of RF electrodes and plurality of traveling wave electrode sets of the at least one electrode arrangement so as to direct the ions away from the pair of guard electrodes and into the ion transfer channel between the guard electrodes.

9. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the guard electrodes comprise at least one or more of an opposing pair of DC electrodes, an opposing pair of RF electrode stacks, or an opposing pair of traveling wave electrode sets.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the traveling wave electrode sets includes a plurality of traveling wave electrodes situated to receive a traveling wave voltage that varies over time so as to direct the ions along toward the output end of the ion transfer channel.

11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the RF electrodes and traveling wave electrodes at the output end of the ion transfer channel are matched in at least one of size, shape, RF voltage signal, or traveling wave voltage signal of respective electrodes at the input end of the ion guide.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the ions have the same or different polarities.

13. A method, comprising:

positioning a plurality of electrode arrangements at oblique angles opposite an ion propagation axis so as to form a ion transfer channel that tapers between an input end and an output end; and

coupling the output end of the ion transfer channel to an input end of an ion optical element so as to direct ions in the ion transfer channel into the ion optical element;

wherein at least one of the electrode arrangements includes a plurality of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets arranged in a surface and the arrangement is tapered in the surface such that there are fewer RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets at the output end of the ion transfer channel than at the input end of the ion transfer channel.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein the coupling includes matching an electric field provided by the ion transfer channel at the output end with an electric field provided by the ion optical element.

15. The method of claim 13, further comprising generating ions with an ion source and collecting the ions in the ion transfer channel.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising directing the ions in the ion transfer channel to the output end with an electric field provided by the plurality of electrode arrangements.

17. The method of claim 14, further comprising directing the ions at the output end into the input end of the ion optical element with the matching electric field.

18. The method of claim 13, wherein the surface is a plane.

19. A method, comprising:

positioning a plurality of electrode arrangements at oblique angles opposite an ion propagation axis so as to form a ion transfer channel that tapers between an input end and an output end; and

coupling the output end of the ion transfer channel to an input end of an ion optical element so as to direct ions in the ion transfer channel into the ion optical element;

wherein the electrode arrangements include guard electrodes situated opposite a plurality of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrode sets so as to direct the ions away from the pair of guard electrodes and into the ion transfer channel between the guard electrodes, and wherein the guard electrodes include at least one of an opposing pair of DC electrodes, an opposing pair of RF electrode stacks, or an opposing pair of traveling wave electrode sets.

20. A system, comprising:

at least one processor; and

one or more computer-readable storage media including stored instructions that, responsive to execution by the at least one processor, cause the system to control electric potentials of RF electrodes and traveling wave electrodes in a plurality of electrode arrangements spaced apart from each other opposite an ion propagation axis and defining an ion transfer channel that extends along the ion propagation axis that tapers between an input end that is situated to receive ions and an output end that is situated to couple the received ions to an input end of an ion guide so that the ions are directed into the ion guide.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the electrode arrangements are arranged in respective electrode arrangement surfaces.

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