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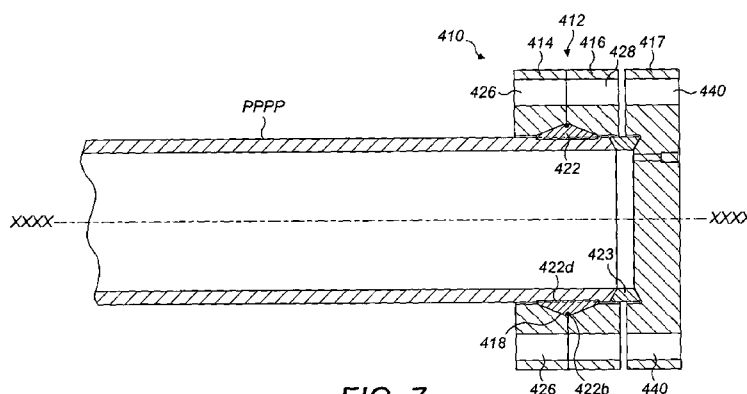


FIG. 7

(57) Abstract: A method and apparatus for gripping, especially a method and apparatus for gripping elongate pieces, such as pipes, bars, beams, etc., are disclosed. The apparatus (410) comprises a body (412), the body having an inner cavity for receiving a piece to be gripped, the inner cavity having a sidewall, a recess (418) provided around at least a portion of the sidewall, a clamping member (422) disposed within the recess, wherein the recess is adjustable from a first dimension, where the clamping member is located substantially within the recess, to a second dimension where the clamping member is urged out of the recess and into the inner cavity. The gripping method comprises the steps of locating a clamping member around a piece to be gripped, locating two clamping shoulders such that they flank the clamping member, compressing the clamping member by urging the clamping shoulders together, the clamping member being arranged such that axial compression of it translates to radial compression.

