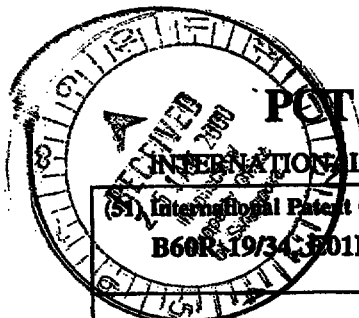




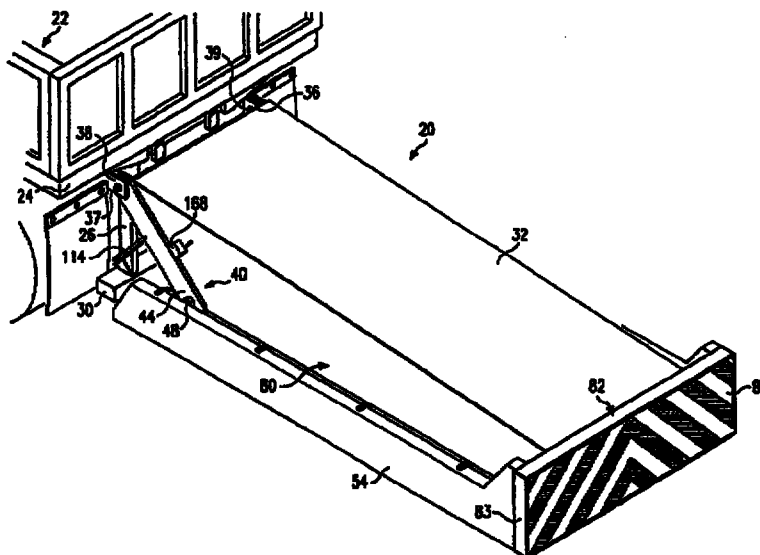
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(54) Title: **ENERGY ABSORBING CRASH CUSHION**



(57) Abstract

Energy absorbing system (20) with one or more energy absorbing assemblies (86) is provided to reduce or eliminate the severity of a collision between a moving motor vehicle and a roadway hazard. Energy absorbing system (20) may be modified for use at a fixed roadside hazard such as the end of concrete barrier (310) or attached to the rear portion of highway service vehicle (22). Energy absorbing system (20) preferably includes impact attenuator (80) having at least one cutter (106, 108) and at least one energy absorbing element (100) slidably disposed relative to each other. Impact plate (82) is also attached to one end of impact attenuator (80) such that a collision by the motor vehicle with impact plate (82) will result in cutter (106, 108) shearing energy absorbing element (100) to dissipate energy from the impact of the motor vehicle.