CLAIMS:

1. A filter assembly for filtering a pollutant stream, comprising:

a plurality of pocket filters positioned adjacent to each other;

each of the pocket filters including a first pocket of a first media material having a thickness of less than 20mm and being oil-compatible and a second pocket of a second media material having a thickness of less than 20mm and being oil-compatible; and

an expansion barrier between adjacent pocket filters of the plurality of pocket filters, the expansion barrier including an open cell material to prevent walls of the adjacent pocket filters from directly contacting while permitting gas to flow therethrough, wherein

the second media material is of a higher efficiency than the efficiency of said first media material,

the first pocket fits within the second pocket and has a depth that is shorter than the depth of the second pocket,

a spacer is positioned between the first and second pockets and provides clearance between the first and the second pockets, and

the spacer has openings that are larger than openings of the first and second pocket media.

2. The filter assembly of claim 1, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form a single multilayered textile.

3. The filter assembly of claim 1, wherein the first pocket is of MERV 9 media and the second pocket is of MERV 14.

4. The filter assembly of claim 1, wherein

the spacer has openings of at least 2 mm in size with an open area fraction greater than 50% and a depth that defines a minimum spacing of at least 3 mm.

5. The filter assembly of claim 1, wherein

the first pocket of a respective pocket filter fits entirely within the second pocket of the respective pocket filter.

6. The filter assembly of claim 1, further comprising an open separation material between the first and second pockets defining an air gap or flow resistant medium between all points of the first pocket and all points of the second pocket.

7. The filter assembly of claim 6, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form a single multilayered textile sheet formed into pockets.

8. The filter assembly of claim 6, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form the first pockets and the second pockets with the separation layer therebetween.

9. The filter assembly of claim 6, further comprising a frame with respective portions extending into an interior of each of the first pockets.

10. The filter assembly of claim 6, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form the first pockets and the second pockets with the separation layer therebetween and the first filtration layer is of uniform structure while the second filtration layer has a backing of higher tensile strength than a remainder of the second filtration layer, whereby the second filtration layer supports the first filtration layer and the separation layer.

11. The filter assembly of claim 6, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form the first pockets and the second pockets with the separation layer therebetween and the first filtration layer and second filtration layer are of uniform structure without a backing of higher tensile strength than a remainder of the first or second filtration layer, the separation layer having a higher tensile strength than the first or second filtration layers, and the first

and second filtration layers are bonded to the separation layer, whereby the separation layer supports the first and second filtration layers.

12. The filter assembly of claim 6, comprising first and second filtration layers and a separation layer, wherein the first and second filtration layers and the separation layer form the first pockets and the second pockets with the separation layer therebetween and the first filtration layer and second filtration layer are of uniform structure without a backing of higher tensile strength than a remainder of the first or second filtration layer, further comprising an external frame surrounding each pocket and preventing the walls of adjacent pockets from contacting each other due to inflation.

13. The filter assembly of claim 6, wherein the flow resistant medium has a lower wicking strength than the media material of the first pocket.

14. The filter assembly of claim 6, wherein the open separation material includes a plastic foam lattice.

15. The filter assembly of claim 6, wherein the open separation material includes a wire frame.

16. The filter assembly of claim 15, wherein the wire frame is attached to the first pocket.