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(54) Title: ANNULAR SEAL ASSEMBLY WITH AXIAL LOAD DECOUPLING FEATURE

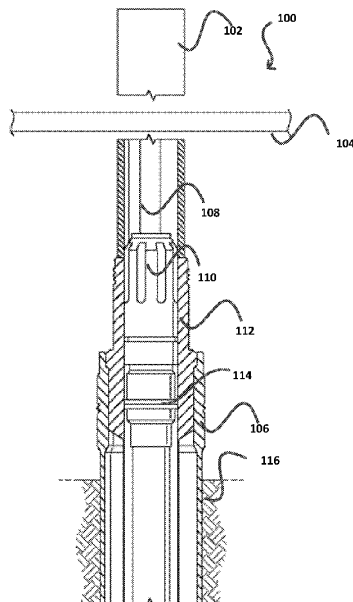


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: An annular seal system for sealing between a casing hanger and a wellhead housing, the system including an actuator ring having a rigid portion and a flexible portion, and a lockdown ring positioned adjacent the actuator ring. The system further includes a seal assembly capable of moving from a de-energized position to an energized position, wherein when the seal assembly is in the de-energized position there is defined a space between the seal assembly and the rigid portion of the actuator ring, and when the seal assembly is in the energized position the space is closed, the rigid portion of the actuator ring contacts a surface of the casing hanger, and the flexible portion of the actuator ring pushes the lockdown ring into engagement with the wellhead, the flexible portion of the actuator ring adapted to axially compress to allow positional variation between the lockdown ring and the wellhead housing.

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