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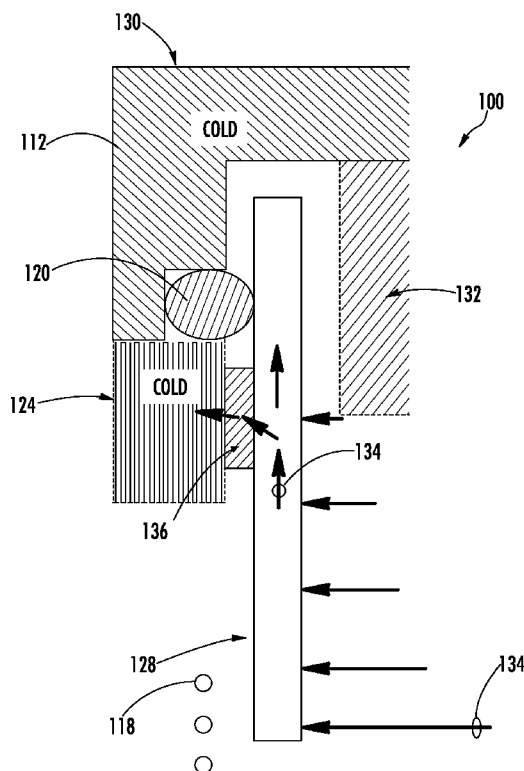


FIG. 3

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods for protecting vacuum seals in a plasma processing system are provided. The plasma processing system can include a vacuum chamber defining a sidewall and an inductive coil wrapped around at least a portion of the sidewall. A vacuum seal can be positioned between the sidewall of the vacuum chamber and a heat sink. A thermally conductive bridge can be coupled between the sidewall and heat sink. Further, the thermally conductive bridge can be positioned relative to the vacuum seal such that the thermally conductive bridge redirects a conductive heat path from the sidewall or any heat source to the heat sink so that the heat path bypasses the vacuum seal.



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