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- (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **AURORA NETWORKS, INC.** [US/US]; 4151 Burton Drive, Santa Clara, CA 95054 (US).
- (72) Inventors; and
- (75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **SUCHARCZUK, Guy** [US/US], 765 Mahogany Lane, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 (US) **WOLODKOWICZ, Wanda** [CA/US], 2221 Lenox Place, Santa Clara, CA 95054 (US) **PRADZYNSKI, Krzysztof** [CA/US], 2221 Lenox Place, Santa Clara, CA 95054 (US).
- (74) Agent: **BRUCKNER, John, J.**; Fulbright & Jaworski L.L.P., Suite 2400, 600 Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701 (US).
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(54) Title: FIBER PROTECTION AND NON-INTRUSIVE EXPANSION METHODS AND APPARATUS

(57) Abstract: Systems and methods are described for communications networks. An apparatus includes a communications link having a splitter-combiner communicatively coupled to a headend, the splitter-combiner including: a signal splitter communicatively coupled to a headend input and communicatively coupled to a downstream output, and a signal combiner communicatively coupled to the signal splitter, communicatively coupled to an upstream input, and communicatively coupled to a headend output. The systems and methods provide advantages because a communication network can be protected, at least in-part, against passive equipment (e.g., optical fiber) failure, active equipment (e.g., data drop/add device) failure and/or equipped for non-intrusive expansion of the network.