

Self-Aligned HARPSS Micromechanical Variable Capacitors (#4359)

A silicon micro-fabrication technique for the implementation of tunable capacitors with very small tuning voltages

Inventors at Georgia Tech have developed a modified HARPSS fabrication process to implement one-port and two-port tunable capacitors, micromachined accelerometers, gyroscopes, resonators and filters. This self-aligned HARPSS fabrication process offers the possibility of having the sub-micron capacitive HARPSS gap together with several self-aligned gaps, which were not available using other bulk micromachining processes. Disclosed are one-port and two-port microelectromechanical structures including variable capacitors, switches, and filter devices. High aspect-ratio micromachining is used to implement low-voltage, large value tunable and fixed capacitors, and the like. Tunable capacitors can move in the plane of the substrate by the application of DC voltages and achieve greater than 240 percent of tuning.

Benefits/Advantages

- Results in larger-value capacitors
- Requires only three lithography masks

Potential Commercial Applications

- Tunable capacitors
- Bulk micromachined resonators and filters
- Accelerometers and gyroscopes

Background/Context for This Invention

Large-value tunable and/or variable capacitors are needed in a variety of applications, including low-frequency tunable filters and electrostatic energy harvesting devices. Although there exist several high-performance capacitors using different fabrication technologies, low actuation voltage tunable capacitors with large values are not available in small form-factor. High aspect ratio poly silicon and single crystal silicon (HARPSS) fabrication technique was previously developed for implementation of high-Q low-voltage one-port capacitors on SOI substrate, but it does not offer two different gap sizes required for tunable capacitors without any lithographic misalignment error.

Dr. Farrokh Ayazi

Professor and Director of Integrated MEMS (IMEMS) Laboratory – Georgia Tech School of Electrical and

Computer Engineering

Dr. Mina Rais-Zadeh

Graduate Research Assistant – Georgia Tech School of Electrical and Computer Engineering (Now at NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory)

Pezhman Monadgomi

Senior Design and Process Engineer - Silicon Clocks

More Information

U.S. Patent Issued - [7977136](#)

Publications

For more information about this technology, please visit:

<https://licensing.research.gatech.edu/technology/self-aligned-harpss-micromechanical-variable-capacitors>

Images:

The automated sequential delivery of multiple fluids. A varying number of delay gates imprinted in the branches are shown in the figure.

COVID-19 and flu saliva test on paper: (A) The automatic sequential delivery of multiple reagents required for virus test; (B) Water pouring into the device triggers the virus assay, allowing the presence of SARS-CoV-2 and influenza A & B viruses to be visually identified by the color changes in the corresponding detection spot

