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(54) **METHOD, APPARATUS, AND COMPUTER PROGRAM PRODUCT FOR HOP COUNT USAGE IN CLUSTER SELECTION**

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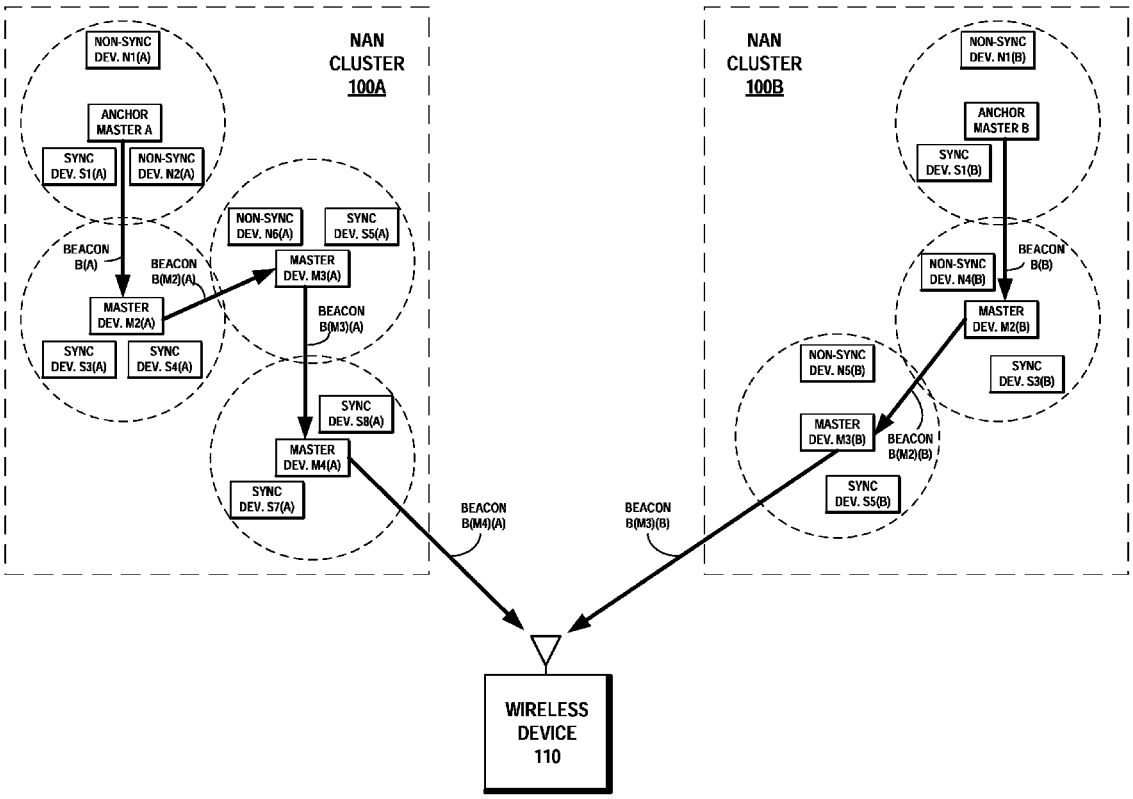
(57) **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments enable access to a wireless communications medium. In example embodiments, a method comprises receiving first synchronization messages from a wireless device transmitting synchronization messages in a first neighbor awareness network cluster, the first synchronization messages including a first hop count value to a first anchor master in the first cluster and information describing a first master rank value of the first anchor master; receiving second synchronization messages from a wireless device transmitting synchronization messages in a second neighbor awareness network cluster, the second synchronization messages including a second hop count value to a second anchor master in the second cluster and information describing a second master rank value of the second anchor master; and selecting the first neighbor awareness network cluster or the second neighbor awareness network cluster, based on at least one of the first and second hop count values and the first and second master rank values.