



Queen-of-the-Hill and Amendments to the FY16 Budget Resolution in the House



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A resolution reported by the House Rules Committee can be used to regulate floor consideration of a legislative measure in the House, including establishing modifications of the amending process, such as limiting the number or order of amendments to be offered. One such modification has been referred to historically as a "queen-of-the-hill" rule. For more information see CRS Report RS20313, *Queen-of-the-Hill Rules in the House of Representatives*, by Megan S. Lynch.

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The amending process normally does not allow for amendments that would amend text that has already been amended. As a result, once a substitute for the full text of a measure has been adopted, no further amendments are in order, since any would constitute attempts to re-amend already amended text. However, special rules occasionally provide that an amendment be in order "notwithstanding the adoption of a previous amendment." Such a structure can be used to provide that the House have an opportunity to vote in succession on each of several competing alternatives for the same text, even if one (or more) achieves a majority vote.

Since 1980, it has been the practice of the House to consider amendments to a budget resolution primarily or exclusively in the form of substitutes that constitute alternatives to the entire budget. For more information, see Table 9 in CRS Report RL30297, *Congressional Budget Resolutions: Historical Information*, by Bill Heniff Jr. The House Rules Committee facilitated this approach by reporting special rules that provided that, if more than one alternative were adopted, the last one that secured a majority vote would be the one considered as finally adopted. These rules, called "king-of-the-hill" rules, were used between 1980 and 1994. After the use of king-of-the-hill rules was discontinued, the House occasionally considered legislation under an

alternative amending structure called a "queen-of-the-hill" rule, which would provide that if more than one alternative received a majority vote, then the one that received the most votes would be considered as adopted. This type of rule was not used for the consideration of budget resolutions, however. Instead, between 1995 and 2014, the House made in order a series of substitute amendments to the budget resolution, with no proviso to allow for consideration of any further amendments if one of them should obtain a majority vote.

[H.Res. 163](#)—the resolution reported from the Rules Committee to provide for the consideration of [H.Con.Res. 27](#), the FY2016 budget resolution—makes use of a queen-of-the-hill structure. This special rule provides for the consideration of six substitutes specified in the report accompanying the resolution and that if more than one of these receives a majority vote, then the one that receives the most votes would be considered as adopted.