

# FORM 4

[ ] Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE  
COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20549**

OMB APPROVAL  
OMB Number: 3235-0287  
Expires: November 30, 2011  
Estimated average burden hours per response... 0.5

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP  
OF SECURITIES**

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934,  
Section 17(a) of the Public  
Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(f) of the  
Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *			2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol			5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)		
<b>HELTON SANDRA L</b>			<b>PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP INC [ PFG ]</b>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Director <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify below)		
(Last)	(First)	(Middle)	3. Date of Earliest Transaction (MM/DD/YYYY)					
			<b>3/15/2012</b>					
711 HIGH STREET (Street)			4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed (MM/DD/YYYY)			6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)		
<b>DES MOINES, IA 50392</b>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Form filed by One Reporting Person <input type="checkbox"/> Form filed by More than One Reporting Person		
(City)	(State)	(Zip)						

**Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned**

1. Title of Security (Instr. 3)	2. Trans. Date	2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any	3. Trans. Code (Instr. 8)		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)			5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction(s) (Instr. 3 and 4)	6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	7. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V	Amount	(A) or (D)	Price			
Common Stock	3/15/2012		M		2000	A	\$27.48	29799	D	
Common Stock	3/15/2012		S		2000	D	\$28.58	27799	D	

**Table II - Derivative Securities Beneficially Owned ( e.g. , puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)**

1. Title of Derivate Security (Instr. 3)	2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security	3. Trans. Date	3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any	4. Trans. Code (Instr. 8)		5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5)		6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date		7. Title and Amount of Securities Underlying Derivative Security (Instr. 3 and 4)		8. Price of Derivative Security (Instr. 5)	9. Number of derivative Securities Beneficially Owned Following Reported Transaction (s) (Instr. 4)	10. Ownership Form of Derivative Security: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4)	11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4)
				Code	V	(A)	(D)	Date Exercisable	Expiration Date	Title	Amount or Number of Shares				
Stock Option (right to buy)	\$27.48	3/15/2012		M		2000		4/29/2005	4/29/2012	Common Stock	2000	\$ 0	0	D	

**Explanation of Responses:**

**Reporting Owners**

Reporting Owner Name / Address	Relationships			
	Director	10% Owner	Officer	Other
<b>HELTON SANDRA L 711 HIGH STREET DES MOINES, IA 50392</b>	<b>X</b>			

**Signatures**

Joyce N. Hoffman, by Power of Attorney

3/16/2012

\*\* Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

\* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, *see* Instruction 4(b)(v).

\*\* Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

Note: File three copies of this Form, one of which must be manually signed. If space is insufficient, *see* Instruction 6 for procedure.

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