

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP**

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

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

| OMB APPROVAL                                 |           |
|--|-----------|
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|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *<br><u>ASCHENBRENNER JOHN E</u><br><br>(Last) (First) (Middle)<br>711 HIGH STREET<br><br>(Street)<br>DES MOINES IA 50392<br><br>(City) (State) (Zip) | 2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol<br><u>PRINCIPAL FINANCIAL GROUP INC [ PFG ]</u> | 5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)<br>Director 10% Owner<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)<br><u>President - Ins. &amp; Fin. Svcs.</u> |
|   | 3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)<br>05/11/2006                              |   |
| 4. If Amendment, Date of Original Filed (Month/Day/Year)  |   |   |

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

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction 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                    | 05/11/2006                           |  | M <sup>(1)</sup>               |   | 15,000  | A          | \$27.48 | 50,968 <sup>(2)</sup>   | D  |   |
| Common Stock                    | 05/11/2006                           |  | S <sup>(1)</sup>               |   | 15,000  | D          | \$54    | 35,968  | D  |   |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                |   |   |            |         | 3,049   | I  | By 401(k) Plan  |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                |   |   |            |         | 100   | I  | By Daughter   |
| Common Stock                    |                                      |  |                                |   |   |            |         | 100   | I  | By Son  |

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

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction 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 (Month/Day/Year) |                 | 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: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 11. Nature of Indirect Beneficial Ownership (Instr. 4) |       |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--------|--|-----------------|---|--|--|---|--|-------|
|  |  |                                      |  | Code                           | V | (A)  | (D)    | Date Exercisable   | Expiration Date |   |  |  |   |  | Title |
| Employee Stock Option (Right to Buy)       | \$27.48  | 05/11/2006                           |  | M <sup>(1)</sup>               |   |  | 15,000 | (3)  | 04/29/2012      | Common Stock  | 15,000                                     | \$0  | 15,205  | D  |       |

**Explanation of Responses:**

- Pursuant to 10b5-1 plan adopted December 5, 2005.
- Includes 2,890 shares acquired pursuant to the Principal Financial Group, Inc. Employee Stock Purchase Plan.
- The option vested in three equal annual installments on April 29, 2003, 2004 and 2005.

**Remarks:**

Joyce E. Hoffman, by Power of Attorney 05/15/2006

\*\* 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.

Persons who respond to the collection of information contained in this form are not required to respond unless the form displays a currently valid OMB Number.