

HELMS LARRY R
Form 4
January 31, 2006

FORM 4

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

OMB APPROVAL

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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(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

(Print or Type Responses)

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
HELMS LARRY R

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
FIRST MERCHANTS CORP
[FRME]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer

(Check all applicable)

(Last) (First) (Middle)
200 EAST JACKSON STREET

(Street)

3. Date of Earliest Transaction (Month/Day/Year)
01/31/2006

____ Director _____ 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)
Senior Vice President / Secretary and General Counsel

MUNCIE, IN 47305

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Filing(Check Applicable Line)
 Form filed by One Reporting Person
 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. 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 Ownership (Instr. 4)
			Code	V Amount (D) Price			
Common Stock	01/31/2006		M	164.96 A \$ 0	25,304.96	D	
Common Stock	01/31/2006		D	164.96 D \$ 26	25,140	D	

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

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SEC 1474 (9-02)

