

Ronnie Isley Pleads Innocent

Written by Robert ID694

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Ronnie Isley

Ronald Isley, soul legend, lead singer of the Isley Brothers, AKA – ‘Mr. Biggs’ to the Rap / Hip Hop community and sometime R. Kelly collaborator pleaded innocent Monday to tax evasion charges.

Ronnie Isley – aka -‘Mr. Biggs’ who suffered a minor stroke back in Aug. 2004, and has appeared on rap and hip hop tracks with Tupac, Mos Def, the Roots, Black Eyed Peas and many others.

The federal government claims he failed to report performance and royalty income to the agency.

The 63-year-old was indicted in October on five counts of tax evasion covering the years from 1997 to 2002 and one count of failing to file an income tax return.

The IRS contends that Ronnie Isley was involved in a host of deceptive practices relating to his finances during that five-year period, among them, a royalty check scheme where Isley deposited checks for his own use that had been issued to other members of the band, including his dead brother, O"Kelly.

The government also claims Ronnie Isley bought personal cars using a business account and paid band members in cash to keep the transactions off the books.

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Isley plans to fight the allegations when the scheduled trial begins March 8 before U.S. District Court Judge Dean Pregerson.

If 'Mr. Biggs' fails in his attempt to clear his name it could mean 20 years in prison for him.

In other Ronnie Isley news; the Isley Brothers signed a deal with Def Soul Classics last May. Their first studio release for the label is expected this year.

According to MTV News, the record may feature some big R&B, hip-hop and rap stars including R. Kelly, Dr. Dre and Nelly.