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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **D.A. DONOVAN: RAPPER “METHOD MAN” CHARGED WITH FAILURE TO PAY OVER \$30,000 IN NEW YORK STATE TAXES**

**\*\*\*Clifford Smith, 38, Charged with Felony, Failed to File Returns & Pay State Income Tax from '04-'07 \*\*\***

STATEN ISLAND, NY - Richmond County District Attorney Daniel M. Donovan, Jr. and New York State Department of Taxation and Finance Acting Commissioner Jamie Woodward today announced that Clifford Smith (DOB: 4/1/1971) of Green Valley Road, has been arrested on felony charges that he failed file New York State Income Tax Returns for the years 2004 through 2007 and failed to pay \$32,799.00 in personal income tax for that same period, not including additional accrued interest and penalties. The defendant, who is also known as the rapper “Method Man” of the *Wu-Tang Clan*, surrendered this morning to the Richmond County District Attorney’s NYPD Detective Squad.

District Attorney Donovan stated, “Taxes are the burden that all citizens share in a civil society, whether you are an “average Joe” on the street or a high-profile rap artist. Because of the alleged action of people like Mr. Smith, law abiding citizens face higher taxes and reduced government services. Failure to properly report and pay your taxes is a crime against all citizens and will be aggressively investigated and prosecuted.”

New York State Department of Taxation and Finance Acting Commissioner Jamie Woodward said, "Our taxes help support education, health care, transportation services and other important government programs. Those who willfully avoid paying their income taxes hurt honest citizens who play by the rules and must now make up the difference. State taxpayers can rest assured that the Tax Department is committed to seeing that the tax laws are equitably and impartially enforced and that all taxpayers, especially those who can most afford to do so, pay their fair share. I thank District Attorney Donovan and his staff for their help in bringing this individual to justice."

The defendant is charged with a top count of Repeated Failure to File Personal Income and Earnings Tax, a Class E felony punishable by up to 4 years in prison, along with a Class A misdemeanor charge of Failure to Pay Tax. He is scheduled to be arraigned today in Staten Island Criminal Court.

The case against Clifford Smith is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jeffrey Curiale of the Investigations Bureau, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Mario F. Mattei, Chief of the Investigations Bureau. The defendant was represented by Peter Frankel, Esq.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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