

## IRS Places Tax Lien on Ruben Studdard

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*American Idol* winner Ruben Studdard is facing tax liens from the Internal Revenue Service and the state of Alabama for failing to pay more than \$193,000 in back taxes.

The singer, nicknamed the "Velvet Teddy Bear," owes \$171,920 to the IRS and \$21,731 to the Alabama Department of Revenue. The tax liens could endanger the opening of a nightclub named after him that is set to debut next summer in Birmingham.

Studdard's attorney, Byron Perkins of the Cochran Law Firm, told the *Birmingham News* that he believes Studdard will be able to pay off the taxes. The singer has a new CD coming out in December and a national tour set to kick off this fall.

Studdard won *American Idol* in 2003, narrowly edging out Clay Aiken in votes. Many of his tax debts can be traced back to that year, when he won a \$1 million recording contract as part of his prize. For 2003, he still owes \$163,836 to the IRS and \$19,581 to Alabama, according to the *Birmingham Business Journal*