

Editorial: ‘People’s audit’ is a fine idea

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Taking campaign promises with a grain of salt is usually a good idea. While candidates look for ways to set themselves apart from their opponents, they often come up with proposals that make government more efficient, but don’t have a snowball’s chance of ever coming to fruition.

We have an ominous feeling that State Treasurer Kay Ivey’s “people’s audit” is such an idea.

Ivey, who is running for governor, promises to conduct such an audit as governor. We have no doubt that such an endeavor would shake Goat Hill to its foundation.

Ivey’s plan is to put every state department under the intense scrutiny of the people of Alabama. Each department would submit a thorough audit, which would be reviewed by independent auditors, who would suggest ways to save tax dollars.

In theory, the people of Alabama would be able see where lawmakers hide large amounts of pork, what departments spend money on unnecessary services and materials, what agencies provide few services to the people of our state and the cost of questionable endeavors, such as Gov. Riley’s heavily staffed raid attempts on Country Crossing and Victoryland last week.

Of course, all this information is public record and should be readily available to any taxpayer who wants to see it, but it’s not as easy to unearth as it should be.

That’s what makes “a people’s audit” appealing; it would put the feet of elected officials and bureaucrats to the fire and reveal information the public has a right to know but that government officials go to great lengths to keep under wraps.

We hope Kay Ivey is right. But if it’s as simple as a gubernatorial dictate, why has it not been done before now?

