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ModSquad Action and Senator Cortez Masto, Colleagues, Host Economic Policy Retreat

Guest speakers included Senator Ruben Gallego and Senator Elissa Slotkin, former U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Miriam Sapiro, Mark Cuban, Brian Tyler Cohen, and more.

ModSquad Action and Honorary Chair Senator Catherine Cortez Masto hosted an economic policy retreat focused on the current economic landscape, opportunities for growth, and strategies for moderates to effectively communicate with their constituents. Honorary Chair Cortez Masto was joined by U.S. Senators Mark Warner, Mark Kelly, Ruben Gallego, Lisa Blunt Rochester, and Elissa Slotkin and staff from across ModSquad Senators' offices.

"Hardworking American families want commonsense politicians who will stand up for them, and that's what we're here to do," **said ModSquad Honorary Chair Senator Catherine Cortez Masto.** "The data is clear: Americans across the country are worried about the cost of groceries, they are worried that prices are going up, and they are worried about their economic futures. And they have a right to be because this Administration's reckless and chaotic policies are putting their livelihoods at risk. But when we show up and work together, we can and will create a path for a brighter economic future that Americans can rely on."

Attendees heard from economic and trade experts, including former U.S. Trade Representative Ambassador Miriam Sapiro, saw new original polling and analysis, discussed effective and intentional communication in the new media environment with Brian Tyler Cohen, and heard from Mark Cuban on risk-taking and developing a strong brand.

On continuing to fight for the core values of America:

"We live in a great country, and we live with all of its challenges. But we are the only country in the world where you can be the first generation to come here, take an

oath to our constitution, and become American. [...] That special sauce, the notion that we are a good country as well as a rich country, a generous country, and a thoughtful country, is something worth fighting for,” **said Senator Mark Warner.**

“We need people to be able to succeed and move up and not feel like they're failing. The middle class needs to be the center of our attention,” **said Senator Elissa Slotkin.**

On the need to modernize our economy:

“As I think about some of the challenges we face, I think about our demographics right now: our birth rate in this country, our aging population in this country, the immigration system that we have, and how that immigration system, or lack thereof, impacts our economy and then our workforce. [...] But we [need to] think about the fact that our workforce isn't ready for AI, and our energy sector isn't ready for all the data centers. We need to be putting forward policies that are aspirational and bigger than what we've talked about in the past,” **said Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester.**

“We know that most voters have not been to college. [...] And in regards to student loan repayment, many of those voters feel like, ‘why are those kids who already got ahead and got a leg up getting this kind of support? And I'm not?’ So we need to do a much better job of setting up vocational and technical training programs in partnership with American companies who want to train our workers to be able to have those jobs in the future. That's really our competitive edge, including in manufacturing,” **said Ambassador Miriam Sapiro.**

On connecting with voters intentionally and strengthening trust in elected officials:

“The things we need to focus on are the things that people care about: their personal economics and their safety. National security is a safety issue, healthcare is a safety issue. We've got to figure out how we can better connect with folks. [...] We've got to keep fighting for them,” **said Senator Mark Kelly.**

“Democrats can't live and win just on policy. We also have to be likable, and sometimes we focus so much, and we work so hard on policy [...] that we forget to do things that make people want to actually support us,” **said Senator Ruben Gallego.**

“When you're looking to solve a problem, you have to do something. Too often, the Democrats talk about budgets: ‘How much money did we get?’ Not, ‘did we solve the problem?’ [...] The Democrats have got to recognize that. And when we pass legislation, it's not just ‘budgets’, it's ‘things are going to change’. Let's set some parameters so that, for example, if we're building a high speed rail in California and

we don't build the first foot in five years, it's canceled," **said entrepreneur Mark Cuban.**

"When people listen to Joe Rogan or any podcaster, they derive a lot of their political worldview from these people. But it's not because of politics first. It's because those people become trusted messengers for them. The people who tune into Rogan are not doing it because of his politics, they're doing it because of him. And then his politics will inform how they might vote in the upcoming election, but his followers might have watched 500 episodes of him before he actually got into politics. [...] So you can still get in front of people and meet them without feeling like every conversation has to be shoehorned into a political narrative. People will side with politicians if they like them as human beings," **said podcaster and creator Brian Tyler Cohen.**

During the day, original polling and analysis conducted by Hart Research and Impact Research was shared and presented a clear roadmap for how moderates can speak to voters' concerns. Americans are overwhelmingly worried about the impact of the current administration's economic policies on their financial stability, and the data clearly shows that people want their elected officials to focus on how they are fighting to lower costs. Armed with this information from across the swing states, moderate Senators have an opportunity to focus their efforts on tackling these economic concerns to improve the lives of Americans across the country.

With a focus on the U.S. Senate, ModSquad Action encourages elected officials to work across the aisle to develop common sense solutions to tough problems. As a key convener of moderate voices, ModSquad is uniquely positioned to help craft a lasting message and break through the noise by reaching key stakeholders through robust education, effective communication, and thorough research.

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