



January 23, 2026

Justin B. Hollander, Ph.D.
Professor
Urban and Environmental
Policy and Planning

To Whom It May Concern,

I have been in contact with Jaroslav Koutský for the last ten years, and our cooperation has brought about great results.

I consider his six-month stay, from September 2018 to February 2019, at Tufts University as part of the Fulbright Program to be a defining moment. This internship gave us the opportunity to have numerous discussions in person about a research topic that has connected us in the long term, urban shrinkage, and particularly in the case of traditionally industrial regions and cities, which we find to be in a very similar condition here in the US and in Central and Eastern Europe. Here, Jaroslav was able to observe the context of development and ways of addressing urban shrinkage in American cities and communities, which undoubtedly broadened his horizons considerably and enabled him to transfer this knowledge to the European and Czech environment. I appreciate that he was very active throughout his stay, he fit in well with my Department and University, participated in classes, took part in professional debates, and became part of the academic community.

The result of our cooperation was the publication of a joint scientific article, which we wrote together with another colleague, Professor Kai Zhou from China. The article was published in the prestigious *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* and compares the context of development and possible solutions to urban shrinkage in three cities: American, Czech, and Chinese. Since its publication, it has attracted academic attention, and over time we have seen an increase in citations.

I am in conversations now with Jaroslav about initiating a new research project together and I am excited for the chance to collaborate with him further. I support the proposal to appoint him as a full Professor.

Sincerely,

Justin Hollander, PhD
Professor and Director, Urban Attitudes Lab